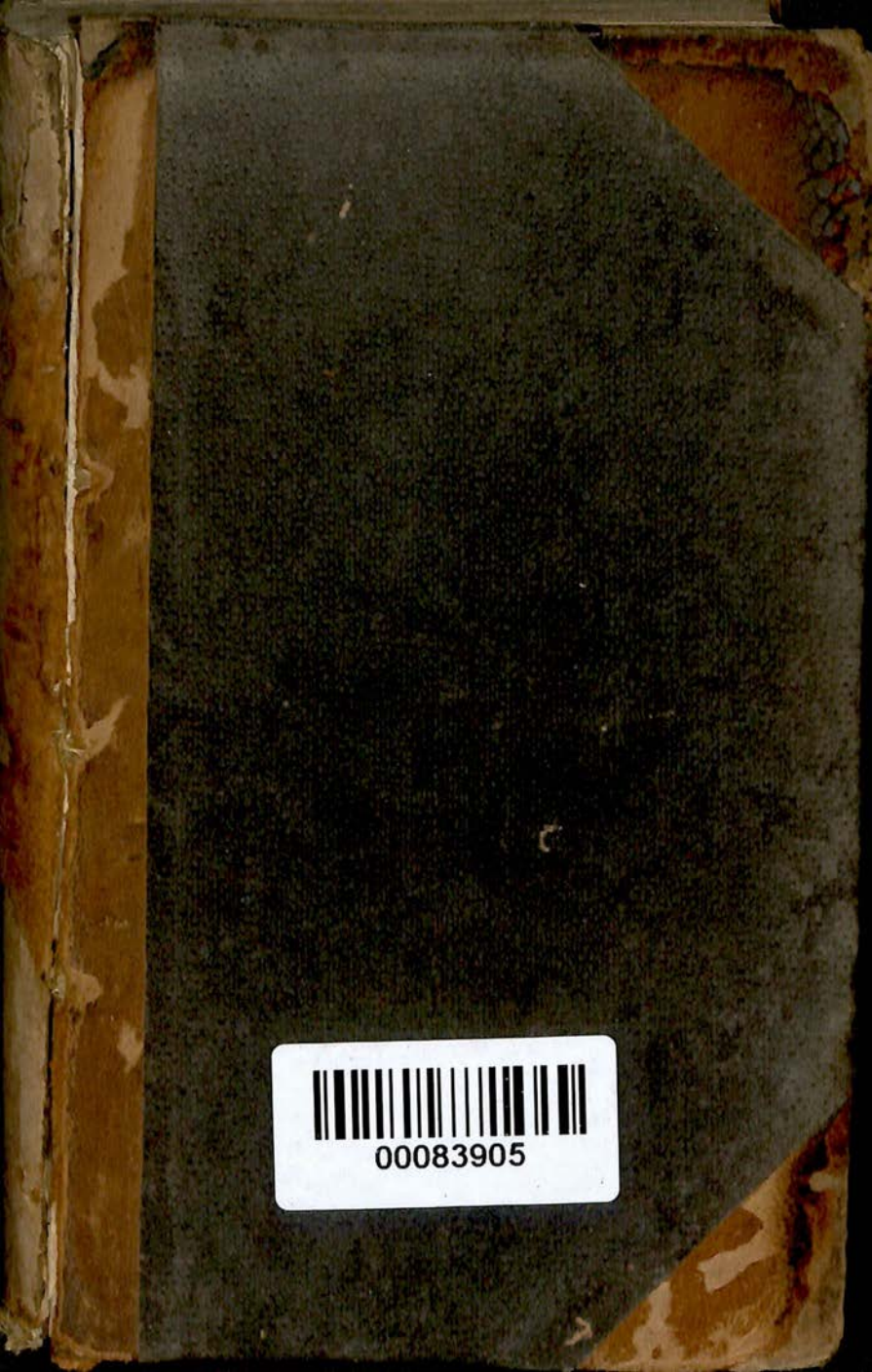
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IRELAND IN 1834.

A

JOURNEY THROUGHOUT

IRELAND,

DURING THE

SPRING, SUMMER, AND AUTUMN OF

1834.

83905

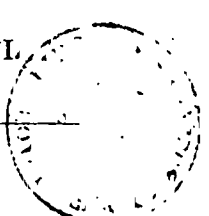
BY

HENRY D. INGLIS,

AUTHOR OF "SPAIN IN 1830," "THE CHANNEL ISLANDS," "THE TYROL," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:
WHITTAKER & CO., AVE-MARIA LANE.

1834.

00083905

LONDON:
PRINTED BY MANNING AND SMITHSON,
IVY-LANE, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

TO

MATTHEW BARRINGTON, ESQ.

My dear Sir,

It is not, believe me, in the foolish vanity of supposing I *confer* a favour, that I dedicate these volumes to you; nor is it even meant, in some sort, as an acknowledgment of the many aids and kindnesses for which I stand your debtor: that debt would continue undiminished, if I were to dedicate to you fifty books,—better than any I either have written, or ever shall write. I have better reasons than these, for my dedication.

Sitting over my coffee, devouring "The Last Days of Pompeii," this note was handed to me:—

"Sir,—We only wait for the contents, and dedication, in order to put the last sheet to press."

The dedication! Why, I never thought of a dedication:—"let the *devil* wait,—and shut the door."

No, said I, laying down my pen, which I had hastily dipped in the ink,—and ringing the bell; I'll not do the thing in a hurry." There's no occasion to wait; I'll send the dedication to-morrow.

This, said I,—drawing my great chair in front of the fire, and placing my slippered feet on the fender,—this is not a thing which ought to be done hastily: a book need not, indeed, have a dedication at all; but, if there be a dedication, it ought to be a judicious one.

* * * * * * *

My book, said I, musingly, and gently tapping the fire,—is a truth-telling book,—it is no party book,—and, God knows—(while a thousand images of appalling misery, and hopeless poverty,—not poetical fancies, but stern realities—thronged upon my memory),—God knows I feel acutely for the people of this unhappy land. I will dedicate my book to some one, who knows thoroughly, the

country and its needs; some one who is no hot and headstrong partizan; some one, who has the good of his country at heart, and who has proved it too.

I wheeled my chair round, and wrote this dedication: and I do most solemnly aver, that if I knew any man better acquainted with Ireland and her people than yourself,—if I knew a man who holds in greater detestation, the extremes of party,—if I knew a man who loves his country better, or would serve it more faithfully than you,—or one who has given more disinterested proofs of sympathy with the helpless poor,—I would dedicate my book to that man. But I know of no such man.

On some points of minor importance, our opinions may not, perhaps, entirely coincide. In the main, however, I trust we are agreed: and when I say, that the people of Ireland are oppressed by some, deluded by others, and neglected by all —and that, notwithstanding the folly, and knavery, and neglect, with which Ireland has been, and is, cursed—she needs but a seed-time of kind deeds,

in order that a harvest of abundant blessings may be reaped, I anticipate a cordial—*Amen.*

Hoping that your days, like those of your respected father, Sir Joseph, may be prolonged,—and that you may, after long years of kind deeds and usefulness, crown "a life of labour with an age of ease" and honour,

I remain,

My dear Sir,

Yours, most faithfully,

HENRY D. INGLIS.

London, November, 1834.

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A JOURNEY

THROUGHOUT IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory Observations — Arrival in Dublin, and First Impressions—Deceptiveness of Appearances in Dublin—Striking Contrasts—The Liberty of Dublin, and its Population—Traits of Character and Condition—Improvidence and Ostentation—Dublin as a City—Its Streets, Squares, Buildings, and Park—The Mendicity, and other Institutions —Society—Street Population.

It would perhaps be an impertinence, were I to begin this book, by any general assertion of the ignorance of the British public, respecting Ireland: there can be no impertinence, however, in acknowledging my own; and now that I have seen Ireland, I may be permitted to say, that during my journey throughout that country, I found more to correct in my previous impressions and

opinions, than in any journey I ever made through any other country. Let me for a moment exclude from this acknowledgment, the social condition of the people of Ireland, and apply it but to all that is visible to the eye,—her cities, towns, and villages; her mountains, vales, and rivers; her mansions, domains, ruins, and castles; the general aspect, in short, of the country; and —without touching yet, upon the social condition of the people—the *aspect* of the population in town and country; in their habitations, their dress, and in all that is external. If I was ignorant upon all these things, how profound must have been my ignorance respecting all that lies beneath the surface; and that can only be come at by patient observation, and anxious inquiry.

I was every where informed, that Ireland is a difficult country to know; that in case of attempting to glean opinions on all hands, their contrariety would bewilder me; or, that if, in endeavouring to avoid this cause of bewilderment, my inquiries took a more limited range, it would in that case be difficult, if not impossible, to escape the influ-

ence of the peculiar opinions of those amongst whom I might be thrown. This difficulty was strongly urged upon me by an eminent and talented judge, at whose table, in Dublin, my intended journey formed the subject of conversation; and he then said, that he could easily imagine two well educated persons, and both equally free from prejudice, returning to Dublin from a journey through Ireland, with views and impressions directly opposed to each other; according as the letters of introduction, which they carried with them, chanced to be, to men of one party, or to men of another.

This most to be dreaded cause of error,—a shoal upon which, I fear, many who have written upon Ireland, have made shipwreck of truth,—I endeavoured to avoid, by seeking and obtaining letters of introduction to men of all opinions, of all ranks, and of all religions; and if, in adopting this course, I encountered that other difficulty, arising from diversity of opinion, I trusted to be able to overcome it, by minute personal observation of the things about which this diversity of opinion existed. I shall give an example of what I mean. I shall

suppose that I have an introduction to a landlord who has a great objection to poor laws, and who is besides, partial to high rents. I say to him, perhaps, "How are the people off in your neighbourhood, — have you many unemployed labourers?" Or, I say to him, "Are rents pretty moderate hereabouts?" Let it be recollected, that I put these questions in utter ignorance of the character and opinions of the individual whom I address; for it may happen, that this man is a good and considerate landlord, and no foe to poor laws. He might probably say, in reply to the first question; "Indeed the people are pretty well off, we have scarcely any unemployed labourers hereabouts." And to my second question he might say; "Indeed rents are pretty moderate in this neighbourhood, we have many comfortable farmers hereabouts." I might put the same questions to an individual of that extreme party, which is desirous of making every thing as bad as possible: and the reply would probably be, "Egad, half the people here are starving;" or "the whole land in this parish is rack-rented."

All this is very puzzling; but the corrective is

to be found in personal observation, and more minute inquiry. If I go to the market-place of the little town, and see some scores of men standing with agricultural implements in their hands, willing to be hired at eightpence a-day without diet, and yet not hired,—then I am sure that there is not constant employment for all who desire it: or, if I go into half-a-dozen cabins, and find every one a filthy hovel, filled with squalid and ragged children, greedily scrambling for a dry potato: or, if I walk into the country, and meet women who have been begging a few potatos amongst the farmers; and if I return with them, and find that they are carrying the potatos home to an infirm mother or father, or husband out of work, or famishing children,—then surely I am able to estimate at its true value, the opinion of the individual who assured me, that "the people were pretty well off." If, on the other hand, I find few labourers idle, and if I find cabins comparatively habitable, and their inmates luxuriating on potatos and butter-milk, enough and to spare; I am then able to correct the assertion of the individual who said half the people were starving.

It is evident, that upon all matters touching the

social condition of a people, opinions may be corrected and estimated by personal observation: and although in journeying through Ireland, one finds abundant cause for astonishment in the widely varying opinions and contradictory assertions upon every subject connected with the country and the people; I yet believe, that truth may be come at by any one who will take pains to seek it out, and who comes to the search with an unbiassed mind:—and before entering upon my journey, I would only add, that I lay claim to this distinction. I have no purpose to serve, no party to please, no interest to consult. I am in every sense unfettered. To be dishonest, therefore, would be an injury to myself; and this is, to the public, the best guarantee for truth.

Early, on a fine spring morning, I crossed the bay of Dublin, and entered Kingston harbour a little after sunrise. The bay of Dublin has been so often described, that it needs no eulogy from me. I will only observe, that if it be deficient in

some of those attractions which characterise the rival bays of more southern climes, it will yield to none, in the extent and depth of its arch, or in the form and character of its mountain boundaries.

When I stepped on shore at Kingston, I looked around me with the same curiosity and interest which I have been accustomed to feel on setting foot on other foreign lands; for my ignorance of Ireland might well justify me in looking upon Ireland as a foreign land, and upon her people as foreigners. This I consider an advantage: for unless a country be so regarded, I question if the traveller will be likely to record those minute and common things, which often throw so much light upon the genius and condition of a people; and by the omission of which, the graphic character of a work is so much impaired. It was somewhat too early in the morning to find much food for observation. I saw beggars as importunate and as needy as elsewhere—porters as loquacious, but more orderly—waiters as eloquent in urging the claims of their hotels—and a new race, the drivers of the jaunting-cars, vociferous in their recommendations of the superior advantages of their vehicles, in con-

venience and cheapness, over all rival and more ambitious conveyances.

First impressions of Dublin are decidedly favourable. Entering from Kingston, there is little to be seen that is unworthy the approach to a capital; and without passing through any of those wretched suburbs which stretch in many other directions, one is whirled at once into a magnificent centre, where there is an assemblage of all that usually gives evidence of wealth and taste, and of the existence of a great and flourishing city.

A stranger arriving in Dublin in Spring, as I did, will be struck, even less by the architectural beauty of the city, than by other kinds of splendour: I allude to the indulgences of luxury, and the apparent proofs of wealth that are every where thrust upon the eye—the numerous private vehicles that fill the streets, and even blockade many of them; the magnificent shops for the sale of articles of luxury and taste, at the doors of which, in Grafton-street, I have counted upwards of twenty handsome equipages; and in certain quarters of the city, the number of splendid houses, and "legion" of liveried servants. But a little closer observation and more

minute inquiry, will in some measure correct these impressions; and will bring to mind the well-known and well-founded proverb, that "it is not all gold that glitters."

And if caution be necessary in drawing conclusions respecting the wealth of Dublin from what meets the eye, tenfold caution is required in drawing any conclusion respecting the condition of Ireland, from even the *real* prosperity of Dublin. I saw comparatively few shops closed, comparatively few houses untenanted. No one complained of want of business: and it is a fact, that all the coachmakers were in such full employment, that no contract could be obtained for building coaches on the Dublin and Kingston railroad. But for my own part, I would rather see a lack of employment among the coachmakers, if this were a proof that Irish landlords remained on their estates, and ran jaunting-cars in place of carriages through their counties; and I would rather see a less competition for fine houses, and smaller fines paid for leases of shops, if this were a proof that there was a less influx of country gentry into Dublin.

But this appearance of even Dublin prosperity,

is somewhat deceptive. I have already hinted that "it is not all gold that glitters;" by which, I mean, that the Dublin tradesman sets up his car and his country-house, with a capital, that a London tradesman would look upon but as a beginning for industry to work upon: and I believe it may be asserted with truth, that there is less profitable trade in Dublin now, than was found some years ago. Dublin formerly possessed an extensive, safe, and very lucrative commission trade from both the West Indies and England; but the facilities of steam-navigation are now so great, that the country dealers throughout Ireland, who formerly made their purchases in Dublin, now pass over to England and there lay in their stocks. This may possibly be good for the public—I do not know whether it be or not,—I merely state a fact not favourable to the prosperity of Dublin.

In walking through the streets of Dublin, strange and striking contrasts are presented between grandeur and poverty. In Merion-square, St. Stephen's-green, and elsewhere, the ragged wretches that are sitting on the steps, contrast strongly with the splendour of the houses and the magnificent equi-

pages that wait without: pass from Merion-square or Grafton-street, about three o'clock, into what is called the Liberty, and you might easily fancy yourself in another and distant part of Europe. I was extremely struck, the first time I visited the outskirts of the city in the direction of the Phœnix-park, with the strong resemblances to the population of Spanish towns, which the pauper population of Dublin presented. I saw the same rags, and apparent indolence—the result of a want of employment, and a low state of moral feeling: boys with bare heads and feet, lying on the pavement, whose potato had only to be converted into a melon or a bit of wheaten bread, to make them fit subjects for Murillo; and houses and cottages in a half-ruined state, with paneless windows or no windows at all. I was also struck with the small number of provision-shops. In London every fifth or sixth shop is a bacon and cheese-shop. In Dublin, luxuries of a different kind offer their temptations. What would be the use of opening a bacon shop, where the lower orders, who are elsewhere the chief purchasers of bacon, cannot afford to eat bacon, and live upon potatos.

As I have mentioned the lower orders in Dublin, I may add, that the house in which I lived in Kildare-street, being exactly opposite to the Royal Dublin Society, which was then exhibiting a cattle-show, I was very favourably situated for observing among the crowd collected, some of those little traits which throw light upon character and condition. I remarked in particular, the great eagerness of every one to get a little employment, and earn a penny or two. I observed another less equivocal proof of low condition. After the cattle had been fed, the half-eaten turnips became the perquisite of the crowd of ragged boys and girls without. Many and fierce were the scrambles for these precious relics; and a half-gnawed turnip, when once secured, was guarded with the most vigilant jealousy, and was lent for a mouthful to another longing tatterdemalian, as much apparently as an act of extraordinary favour, as if the root had been a pine-apple. Yet these mouthfuls were freely given; and I have seen, that where two boys contended who should take charge of a gentleman's horse, the boy who obtained the preference and got the penny or twopence, divided it with his rival. These were

pleasing traits; and were indicative of that generosity of character which displays itself in so many kindly shapes; but which is perhaps also in some degree the parent of that improvidence, to which the evils of absenteeism are partly to be ascribed.

There can be no doubt that this trait of national character—improvidence, allied with a love of ostentation—has greatly swelled the lists of absentees, and helps in no inconsiderable degree, to keep up the deceptive appearance of Dublin wealth. With few exceptions, a Dublin tradesman who has realized 10,000*l.* or perhaps a greatly less sum, is above his business, sets up his jaunting-car, becomes the possessor of a villa, and entertains company. Ostentation, too, is displayed in the most singular things. I have counted twenty-seven hackney-coaches and sixteen cars, in the funeral procession of a person in the humbler walks of life: and the passion for display on the part of the deceased's relatives, seemed to have been communicated to his guests, for the carriages were all thrown open; and from the gaiety of the dresses, one might have easily mistaken the cavalcade for a procession of wedding guests. Many of my readers have seen this—it

may be seen any day. But as it struck me, who had never seen it before, as singular, it may be worth telling to others.

Dublin, for its size, is a handsomer city than London. Sackville-street will compare with any street in Europe; Merion-square and St. Stephen's-green surpass in extent any of the squares in the British metropolis. There are points of view in Dublin, embracing the principal streets, the quays (for Dublin has quays), and some of the finest public edifices, more striking I think than any that are to be found in London: and although the Irish capital can boast of no St. Pauls, yet, in the architectural beauty of some of her public buildings, she has just reason for pride. I need but name the Custom-house; and the Bank of Ireland, with its magnificent and yet classically chaste colonnades, in proof of this assertion.

The inhabitants of Dublin are justly proud of their Phœnix-park. Neither in extent, nor in natural beauty, will any of the London parks bear the slightest comparison with it. It was here that, for the first time, I saw those magnificent thorn trees, which I afterwards found so constant an

adorner of every gentleman's park, and which, even by the highways, greatly outvie the thorns of of our English lanes. The Phœnix-park is of enormous extent—said, and I believe truly, to contain nearly three thousand English acres. Like Greenwick-park, it has its mounts, and its fine single trees, and its shady avenues; but these are more like the avenues of the *bois de Boulogne;* and besides all this, it has its valleys, and ravines, and extensive groves. In fact, the Phœnix-park, both in extent, and in diversity of surface, is superior to any public park, promenade, prater, or prado, belonging to any European city that I know. The access, however, is bad. On one side, it is approached through a bad suburb; and by any way, it is distant and dusty. That it should be the latter, surprised me: for surely, where there are so many unemployed poor, and such abundance of water, the access to this great resort, ought to be deficient in no advantage which labour could secure. The Zoological-gardens have lately been constructed on an eligible part of the Phœnix-park; and when I visited Dublin, were quite a fashionable lounge. As much as 30*l.* per day, were taken from visitors by the sixpenny entrance fee.

Notwithstanding the fascination of Dublin society, my anxiety to commence my journey increased; for Dublin is not Ireland—and it was Ireland I had come to see. Some of the most interesting among the public institutions, particularly the Bank, and Trinity College, and the neighbouring Catholic College of Maynooth, I resolved to delay visiting until my return to Dublin. There was one institution, however, of which I had heard so much, that I could not leave Dublin without visiting it. I allude to the Mendicity Society. This society may be considered a concentration of all the industrious pauperism of Dublin. In a country where there is no legal provision for even the aged and infirm, some institution of this kind is no doubt essential, not only on a principle of humanity, but for common decency's sake. But such institutions are, after all, miserable make-shifts; and a visit to the Dublin Mendicity Society will not put anybody in love with that system of voluntary charity, which, we are told by an eminent divine, is so blessed an encourager of human sympathies.

When I visited the Dublin Mendicity Society, there were 2145 persons on the charity, of whom

200 were Protestants. The finances were then at a very low ebb; and the directors of the institution were threatening a procession of the mendicants through the streets, by way of warming the charity of the spectators. This, I understand, has once or twice been resorted to; and I confess, I cannot conceive any thing more disgraceful to a civilised community. The English reader, who has never visited Ireland, can have no conception of a spectacle such as this. What a contrast to the gaiety of Grafton-street, would be the filth, and rags, and absolute nakedness, which I saw concentrated in the court of the institution! The support of this charity is a heavy tax upon the benevolent feelings of the Protestant population: 50*l.* is subscribed by the Protestant, for 1*l.* that is subscribed by the Catholic population. I was sorry to learn this; for although it be true that wealth lies chiefly amongst the Protestants, yet it is the middle classes, rather than the wealthy, who support this institution; and 50*l.* for 1*l.* is surely out of proportion.

I will not enter into any details respecting an institution which cannot, I trust, be a permanent one. I saw some at work, earning a pittance of a

few pence per week. I saw hundreds, for whom no employment could be found, lying and sitting in the court, waiting for the mess which had tempted them from their hovels, and the incertitude of mendicancy—which many however prefer; and I saw an attempt at teaching the young—who, whatever progress they may make in head learning, cannot, I fear, make great progress in morals, consigned, as they are, after day-light, to the care of their worthless parents; and returning to the hovels in which vice and misery are so often united.

The same day that I visited the Mendicity Society, I visited also two other institutions—the House of Industry, and the Foundling. The former of these is upon an enlarged, and very admirable footing, and is altogether as fine an institution of the kind as I have any where seen. The Foundling Hospital was, at one time, an immense institution, providing for not less than 10,000 children. This institution is now breaking up, and is to be superseded by separate county hospitals. The education of the children in this great hospital, having been a Protestant education, the Catholic party in Ireland could not look upon

it with much favour; and the new arrangement is generally said to be the result of Catholic interest —I know not with what truth.

No well recommended stranger in Dublin, can leave it without many pleasant recollections; for it must be associated with much of hospitality and kindness; and with much of that refinement that lends to society so great a charm. There is in Dublin, all the materiel for the enjoyments of society: excellent houses; handsome furniture and appointments; a sufficiency of domestics; good taste; and a will, to make all these subservient to the pleasures of intercourse, and the virtue of hospitality.

I should say of the street population of the best quarters of Dublin, that it differs little from that of London; and that, but for the multitude of jaunting-cars, which are peculiar to the country, one set down in Sackville, or Grafton-street, would scarcely perceive any thing un-English in the aspect of the population. But there are differences, which a somewhat closer observation will detect. The ladies dress more gaily, gentlemen not quite so well. Beggars, if not greatly more numerous than

in London, are greatly more ragged and miserable looking: but, above all, there is less an air of business than among the street population of London. There is a greater proportion of loungers; and a less number of those, whose quick step and eager look, bespeak occupation and its rewards. Need I say, that there is also a difference between English and Irish physiognomy: but there is no describing this difference. It exists, however; and will be remarked by the stranger, even on a very cursory glance: and certainly, not to the disadvantage of the Irish females, whose generally high foreheads, and intellectual expression, were not thrown away upon me.

CHAPTER II.

Journey through Wicklow to Avoca—The Meeting of the Waters, and the Vale of Avoca—The Jaunting-car—Condition of the People, and Mode of Life—Facts—Religious Differences—Journey to Wexford—Gorey, and its neighbourhood—The People—Loan Society—Rents—Orange Lodges—Lord Courtown's Domain—Ferns and its Bishop—Enniscorthy—Lord Portsmouth's Estate—Approaches to Wexford—the Town and its Inhabitants—Prices—The Barony of Forth; the state and peculiarities of the Inhabitants.

I cannot commence my journey, without acknowledging the assistance which all who were acquainted with my prjoect so eagerly proffered. I have already said, that I was desirous of hearing what men of all conditions, and of all opinions, had to say: and in the accomplishment of this wish, I found every aid. I carried with me from Dublin, upwards of 130 letters of introduction, to persons of all ranks, from the peer to the farmer (to the peasant I introduced myself); and of all opinions, from the Orange magistrate of Down and Derry, to the

Catholic repealer of Kilkenny and Tipperary; from the Protestant dignitary, to the country curate; from the Catholic bishop, to the parish priest. To those acquainted with Ireland, I need not say how these letters were prolific; I am persuaded, that from leaving Dublin until returning to it, I delivered at least three times the number of letters I have mentioned. I have two objects in mentioning these facts: the one, as demonstrative of the desire of all parties that the truth should be told; the other, as proving to the public, that I was not in the hands of any particular party. But the former of these requires a few words of explanation. Whether from the nature of the introductions I carried from England, or from conversation, or from the books which I had already published, there was a general impression that I meant to speak the truth; and this being once believed, I found men of all parties eager to put me in *their* way of finding it. It may be, that some had not truth in view; and that the letters which I received from these, to persons of their own sentiments, were meant to perpetuate error. This *may* have been: I do not know that it was; and I trust, and indeed

believe, that the instances were rare. To me, however, the advantage was the same: and there is one thing certain, that my opinions cannot be biassed by the hospitalities I received; for these I received equally from men of all parties and all beliefs.

I left Dublin in the afternoon, for Inniskerry, a little village about nine miles from Dublin, on the borders of the county of Wicklow; and arrived there about dusk, after a drive through an agreeable country, fertile and well wooded for several miles after leaving Dublin, but of a wilder character as it approached the mountains.

It would be no difficult matter to fill a chapter with descriptive sketches of the county of Wicklow; and Inniskerry, the village at which I have now arrived, is always the first head quarters of the Wicklow tourist. But I have no intention of filling any great space in these volumes with descriptions of scenery; and where I make an exception to this rule, it will be in favour of places less likely to be known to the reader, than the Dargle, the Devil's Glyn, Powerscourt, and the Seven Churches. It is certainly a great advantage, that which is possessed by the inhabitants of Dublin, of

being able, during a three days' tour, to see so sweet an union of the beautiful and the picturesque, as many parts of Wicklow present; and even to form a conception of the still higher attractions of mountain scenery. It is true, everything here is *en petit;* but it is a beautiful minuteness.

From my head quarters at Inniskerry, which, by the by, is a clean and prettily situated little village, I visited the Glen of the Downs, the Dargle, and Powerscourt, whose waterfall, so much extolled in the Guide-books, pleased me less than the fine vegetation and magnificent timber on the domain through which the road is constructed: and on the evening after my arrival at Inniskerry, I took my seat, in company with five other persons, on a public car, which plies between that village and another, called Roundwood, about nine miles distant.

It is singular that I should have written a whole chapter, without having made special mention of the Irish jaunting, outside car. Although there are carriages of all descriptions in Ireland, and coaches too on many of the public roads, the jaunting car is the national vehicle; and Ireland would

scarcely be Ireland without it. It may be said completely to supersede, as a private vehicle, the whole of the gig tribe,—dennet, tilbury, cabriolet, &c.; and to be a formidable rival to the coach, as a public conveyance. Throughout the whole of the south, and a great part of the west of Ireland, the public, as well as the mails, are chiefly conveyed by cars; and it is no small convenience to the traveller, that he may travel post, by a car, at eightpence, and in some parts, at sixpence per mile, throughout Ireland, as expeditiously, and, in fine weather, far more agreeably, than in a post-chaise. But to return to its peculiarities, and pros and cons,—everybody has no doubt seen an Irish car; for a stray specimen now and then makes its appearance across the Channel; and I need not therefore tell, that an Irish car is a vehicle generally drawn by one horse; and that two, four, or six persons, sit back to back. How any thing so unsociable should have been first thought of, it is difficult to understand; but it is fair to admit, that when few persons are seated on a car, there is an easy, lounging way of sitting, not absolutely prohibitory of social intercourse. The great advantage

of an Irish car, is the facility of getting up and down; which, in travelling on a hilly road, is very desirable. But as I shall have frequent occasion to mention these vehicles, I shall proceed on my journey.

It chanced that I was seated next to the Protestant clergyman of an adjoining parish; and we soon got into conversation. He told me he was a considerable landowner, as well as a clergyman: and spoke strongly, of the discomfort of having a Catholic tenantry about him; which, however, he was doing his best to rid himself of. I was unfortunate in this first specimen of the country clergy I had met. I told him, I thought he was fortunate in having a tenantry at all; and so as they paid their rents, it seemed a matter of comparatively little importance of what religion they were; and notwithstanding the little sympathy which I evinced, we continued pretty good friends as far as Roundwood. The country between Inniskerry and Roundwood is very varied in its aspect: for several miles, the road runs through the Powerscourt domain; but afterwards, through a wild and uninteresting country, but evidently under improve-

ment. I noticed more than one substantial farm-house newly built, or in course of building.

It was after dark, and on a somewhat chilly evening, when I reached Roundwood; and here, for the first time, I experienced the comforts of a turf fire; the easiest lighted, and therefore, to a traveller, the most agreeable of all fires. For home comfort, commend me to a sea-coal fire! but in travelling, commend me to whatever kind of fire soonest produces the desired results,—heat and cheerfulness. There is nothing to detain one at Roundwood; and I left it accordingly, early next morning, with the intention of sleeping at Avoca, and of resting there a few days. From Roundwood, I passed through a wild but more interesting country; I had the colour and the fragrance of the bright whin blossom, and the companionship of a noisy brook. I made a little *detour*, to glance at Glendalough, more commonly known as "the Seven Churches,"—a wild spot, not unworthy of a visit,—and then continued my journey to Rathdrum and Avoca. After passing Rathdrum, the country improves in picturesqueness; and a few miles beyond Rathdrum the attention of the tra-

veller is arrested by the driver of his car turning round, and saying, "the Meeting of the Waters, your Honour." But for associations, this spot, I think, would disappoint the traveller. There is a bridge, and the meeting of two streams, and wooded hills, and the handsome residence of Colonel Howard; but to my mind, the character of the valley improves in beauty as we descend. The valley widens; green meadows are left between the river and the more retiring banks; and the feathery birch, then bursting into leaf, contrasted finely with the dark firs, and with those beautiful evergreens, of which, in my journey through Ireland, I shall so often have occasion to speak. Towards evening, I arrived at Wooden Bridge Inn, Avoca

"There 's not in the wide world a valley so sweet."

That, I will not venture to say; but I will say, "sweet vale of Avoca;" for this I can say conscientiously.

I remained here three days, walking up the glens and among the mountains; mixing with, walking with, and talking with the people; and allowing the interest which I felt in a fine and

romantic country, to be lost in the higher interest, which attaches to the social condition of the people.

The contemplation was a less pleasant one:—for notwithstanding that I was in the next county to Dublin; that Wicklow is a county *orneé*, full of villas and gentlemen's seats; and that the mines in this county, and in the vicinity of the spot which is at present my head quarters, employ nearly two thousand persons;—notwithstanding all this, I found little satisfactory in the condition of the people.

I found rents in Wicklow such as, for the most part, could never be paid by the produce of the land; and the small farmers, as well as labourers, barely subsisting. High rent was the universal complaint; and the complaint was fully borne out, by the wretched manner in which I found the people—Catholic and Protestant—living. And if the question be put to them, why they take land at a rent which they know it will not bear,—the reply is always the same: how were they to live? what could they do? From which answer we at once arrive at the truth,—that competition for land

in Ireland, is but the outbiddings of desperate circumstances.

As for the condition of the labouring classes, I found little to bear out the assertions of some of my Dublin friends, to whom Wicklow ought to have been familiar,—that I should find all the labourers employed, and tolerably comfortable. On one of the afternoons I spent here, I walked up a mountain road, and after a short walk, reached a glen with several cabins scattered in it; and three of these I visited.

The first I entered was a mud cabin,—one apartment. It was neither air nor water tight; and the floor was extremely damp. The furniture consisted of a small bedstead, with very scanty bedding, a wooden bench, and one iron pot; the embers of some furze burnt on the floor; and there was neither chimney nor window. The rent of this wretched cabin, to which there was not a yard of land, was two pounds.

The next cabin I entered, was situated on the hill side: in size and material it was like the other. I found in it a woman and her four children.

There were two small bedsteads, and no furniture, excepting a stool, a little bench, and one pot. Here also were the burnt embers of some furze, the only fuel the poor in this neighbourhood can afford to use. The children were all of them in rags; and the mother regretted that on that account she could not send them to school. The husband of this woman was a labourer, at sixpence per day; — *eighty* of which sixpences,—that is, eighty days' labour, being absorbed in the rent of the cabin, which was taken out in labour; so that there was little more than fourpence halfpenny per day left, for the support of a wife and four children, with potatos at fourpence a stone.

I entered one other cabin: it was the most comfortless of the three; it was neither air nor water tight, and had *no* bedstead, and no furniture, excepting a stool and a pot; and there were not even the embers of a fire. In this miserable abode there was a decently dressed woman with five children; and her husband was also a labourer, at sixpence per day. This family had had a pig; but it had been taken for rent a few days before. They had hoped to be able to appropriate the

whole of the daily sixpence to their support, and to pay the rent by means of the pig; but the necessities of nature, with the high price of potatos, had created an arrear before the pig was old enough to be sold. The landlord might not be to blame: he was a very small farmer of hill land, at twenty shillings an acre; and was just as hard set to live, and pay *his* rent, as his humbler dependent was.

I am only beginning my journey: this is but the county of Wicklow; and I was told that I should find all so comfortable in Wicklow, that from the comparatively happy condition of the peasantry there, I must be cautious in forming any opinion of the peasantry generally. While I write this sentence, I write in utter ignorance of what I may yet see; for I write this work almost in the manner of a diary,—noting down my observations from week to week: but from what I have already seen, I am entitled to fling back with indignation the assertion, that all the Irish industrious poor may find employment. But what employment? employment which affords one stone

of dry potatos per day for a woman and her four children.

A labourer in this county considers himself fortunate in having daily employment at sixpence throughout the year; and many are not so fortunate. I found some who received only fivepence; but there are many who cannot obtain constant employment, and these have occasional labour at tenpence or one shilling; but this, only for a few weeks at a time. I found the small farmers living very little more comfortably than the labourers. A little buttermilk added to the potatos, made the chief difference.

Upon one subject, it is obvious that I must substitute inquiry for personal observation; I mean in relation to the important question, whether there has been any improvement in the condition of the people of late years. I might indeed infer, that no improvement *could* have taken place in the condition of a people whom I find in rags,—living in mud cabins, without furniture and windows, and sometimes without chimneys; and existing upon a scanty meal of potatos. But I have not contented myself with this inference, and have always anx-

iously inquired of those most able to give me correct information,—always old persons, and persons of different ranks and opinions; one or two landlords; one or two farmers, both Catholic and Protestant; and frequently the Protestant clergyman and the Catholic priest;—and of Wicklow, I may say, that I found nothing to induce the belief, that any improvement had taken place in the condition of either the small farmer or the labouring classes. The number of absolutely unemployed poor has decreased with the active working of the mines at Glendalure, which employ about two thousand persons. But task work, and consequent high wages, have attracted many from a distance; and the miners are a drunken and improvident race. One who had earned thirty shillings the past week, came into the inn while I was there; and I heard him regretting that it was impossible for him to drink the whole of this sum.

I deeply regretted to see at Avoca, a proof of the bad feeling which in that part of the country appears to exist between the Catholic and Protestant population. I was sitting at the window of the inn, on Sunday evening, when a man, in a

state of intoxication, came along the road, calling out, "To the Devil with the Boyne waters, and they who drink them." Presently three men, who were sitting on the bridge, followed the offender, threw him down, beat and kicked him brutally, and stamped upon his face; ten or a dozen persons were by, and no one interfered; and the men walked away, leaving the other on the ground in a state of insensibility. The explanation is this: there was till lately, only one brewery at Rathdrum, the property of Catholics. Another brewery was recently set up by Protestants, in the same town; and the ale brewed in it is called by the Catholics, "the Boyne waters." I regret, in the outset of my book, to be obliged to record these facts. I trust I shall not have many such to record.

Before leaving the vale of Avoca, I must endeavour to give the reader some general idea of a spot so celebrated in song. The whole vale is about five miles long, and is generally about a quarter of a mile broad. It begins at the spot called "the meeting of the waters," where the Avonbeg and the Avonmore join their streams, and take the name of

Avoca. Nearly four miles lower, another stream joins the Avoca; and this second meeting of waters, quite as beautiful as the first meeting, is said by those who live near to it, to be *the* meeting of the waters. The vale of Avoca is chiefly in pasture: the fields are divided by whin hedges; and the hills which flank the valley on both sides, are covered to the summit with wood, chiefly ash, birch, and fir, mingled with "the green holly," and with laurel and laurestinus. Abundance of sweetbrier, too, lends its perfume, and millions of blue hyacinths their beauty, to the shady paths that traverse in a hundred directions these wooded hills.

I left Avoca for Gorey and Wexford by the coach, which passed by the inn door. The road skirts the river, and runs underneath fine wooded banks almost all the way to Arklow, one of the poorest looking villages that could well be seen. It is entirely supported by the herring-fishery during the season; but all the rest of the year, is miserably off. Soon after leaving Arklow, we entered the County of Wexford; and after passing through a poorish, uninteresting, and not thickly peopled country, I reached Gorey, where I pur-

posed making a halt, having several letters of introduction in the neighbourhood.

I found a good deal to please me in and about Gorey. There are a considerable number of resident landlords in this part of Wexford; and the property of the absentee landlords is under good management. The condition of the people too, especially of the farmers, is, upon the whole, better than in Wicklow; though here also, anything approaching to constant employment for the labourer, is not to be had, and the wages of labour are scarcely higher. In my first perambulation in the neighbourhood of the town, I visited two very nice clean cabins, with partition walls in them, and a respectable display of crockery. One of these had been erected by the tenant, who paid thirty shillings ground rent. The sum necessary for building the cabin, had been advanced by a loan society, which has been established in Gorey; and from which, I found a general impression, that great good had resulted. Artizans and country labourers equally availed themselves of it;—the shoemaker, for instance, obtained money to purchase leather; the countryman, to buy a pig or build a cabin, or to seed his patch

of ground. The sums lent, are from 1*l.* to 5*l.*; and are repaid by weekly instalments, at the rate of a shilling for each 1*l.* lent: sixpence interest on each 1*l.* is also paid; and every borrower must give two joint-securities, and produce a character from two householders, for honesty and sobriety. I found that the loans were repaid with wonderful punctuality, and that the society had not actually lost one penny. Independently of the advantage in condition, which must accrue to a small place from a circulating capital of some hundred pounds, good moral effects are likely, I think, to result. Habits of punctuality are encouraged, and so is sobriety; since this virtue is essential to obtaining a loan. Supposing the advantages of these societies admitted, could not such establishments be made general throughout Ireland, by government advancing money to local committees (upon the joint-security of such committees, as trustees), at such a rate of interest—say four per cent., as would cost the nation nothing? This, I think, is worthy of consideration.

Most of the cabins I visited in this neighbourhood, boasted a pig; in many cases, the result of a loan. Most of them were in styes, but some in the

cabins, where, as Paddy says, he has the best right to be, "since it's he that pays the rint." "We'll be quite comfortable when we get the stye up," said one young woman not twenty years of age, who, with two children and the pig, occupied a very clean neat cabin;—her husband was a labourer, at tenpence per day, without diet. The secret of these very nice cabins, I found to be, a premium offered by an agricultural society, of from 10*s.* to 2*l.*, for the cleanest and most comfortable cottages. To obtain these premiums, great exertions are made; and a loan from the loan society I found, had in most cases been necessary, to produce that neatness and air of comfort likely to secure the premium. I need scarcely say, that there was otherwise no improvement in condition; but that, on the contrary, greater privations were requisite, in order to pay back the weekly instalment.

Land, in this part of Wexford, is universally let too high. A very fatal admission was made to me here, by an agent of extensive properties, the rents of which were among the lowest in the neighbourhood. He said, that although the price of the land let by him was not determined by competition; that

is, although he did not let to the highest bidder, he nevertheless took more money than the land was worth; and that this, he was in a manner forced to do, in order not to depart too entirely from the practice of the neighbourhood. I found that where farms had been let by competition, farmers were miserably off. Others I found, with farms of sixty and seventy acres, let at twenty-five shillings overhead, comfortable; these farms, if they had been let to the highest bidder, would have brought thirty-five shillings; and the tenant, in place of being comfortable, would have been in the condition of the labourer.

Religious bitterness is carried very far in this neighbourhood; and this may be mainly ascribed to the recent institution of an Orange lodge. If government will continue to apply such remedial measures as the state of Ireland requires, and will present a firm front to all improper demands, there will be no occasion for Orange lodges. The results of this ill-judged zeal are strikingly displayed at Gorey. There is a Protestant and a Catholic inn—known by these names; the Protestant and the Catholic coach, owned by, driven

by, and supported by, persons of different persuasions; and the very children, playing, or squabbling in the street, are divided into sects. This is miserable work, for which the institutors of the Orange lodge have to answer.

While at Gorey, I visited the domain of Lord Courtown; which is small, but very beautiful. It is a little green Paradise, sloping up from the sea, with fine avenues of old wood, and with clumps of evergreens, laurel especially—the luxuriant growth of which, I had never seen equalled in England. They are constructing a little harbour, which, when completed, will be of much use to the fishery on this coast, which has greatly suffered from the want of some refuge.

It struck me, as I returned from Courtown, and walked up the street of Gorey, that the people looked less industrious than the population of an English town. Over almost every half-door, somebody was leaning with crossed arms; and many others, sitting at their doors, doing nothing. No doubt the little retail shopkeepers had some idle time on their hands; but English people, both men and women, generally find some little job to do;

and when one sees the tattered coats and small-clothes, which in Ireland are worn even by others than beggars, and which ten minutes and a needle and thread would put to rights, unfavourable comparisons are apt to be made.

After spending two days at Gorey, I proceeded to Wexford; the road to which, by Ferns and Inniscorthy, is rather an interesting one. Between Gorey and Ferns, I passed through an open country, with furze inclosures, and all under cultivation. I noticed some country houses with flourishing plantations, and the cabins by the wayside were not of the worst description. Most of the inmates possessed pigs; some had styes, but I noticed several snouts at the cabin doors. There chanced to be in the coach a parcel for the Bishop of Ferns; and in order to deliver it, the coach left the high road, and drove for about two miles through the domain, and past his lordship's house. This evinced some respect for the church. The bishop's park is pretty, and the house handsome and substantial. Ferns is a poor village, with nothing to recommend it excepting some rather extensive ruins, part of them, they say, of a king's palace.

The approach to Enniscorthy is imposing: there is an ancient look about it, and some grey towers; and the navigable river, and bridge, and wooded banks, form rather a striking assemblage of images. The reader probably knows that Vinegar-hill, of bloody memory, lies close to this town. Enniscorthy possesses extraordinary advantages, and ought to be an extremely flourishing town; for the corn of the greater part of the county of Wexford passes through the market of Enniscorthy, and is shipped there. But this town is one of the victims of absenteeism of the worst kind; for even the agent of Lord Portsmouth, to whom the town belongs, does not live in the neighbourhood, but in Dublin, and only visits Enniscorthy to collect rent,—leaving, no doubt, some subordinate individual to scrape in the odds and ends which he has not had time to collect. Notwithstanding that it was a holiday when I passed through Enniscorthy, there was a busy corn market, and a large concourse of people in the streets, buying and selling.

The country between Enniscorthy and Wexford is extremely interesting: the banks of the Slaney, a fine navigable river, are fertile and beautiful, and

there is a fair sprinkling of gentlemen's seats. The country is almost all under tillage, and I every where noticed an excellent promise of crops. The cabins too were not of the worst kind; most of them had windows and chimneys; and the children about the doors were several degrees removed from nakedness. About three miles from Wexford, I crossed a wooden bridge of extraordinary length, thrown over the estuary, which here opens out into several fine reaches, presenting, both above and below the bridge, some very sweet scenes of the softer character. The immediate approach to Wexford is excellent: there is a fine broad road, flanked by many excellent houses; and being the evening of a holiday, I had a favourable sample of the population.

The best part of Wexford is seen before getting fairly into it. Its localities are soon described. It consists of one very long, and very narrow street, and a quay running parallel to it, and of nearly equal length; together with a few short side streets somewhat wider than the main street, and not so much the resort of business. There is also a very long, poor suburb, chiefly inhabited by the fisher-

men. There are many good shops in Wexford, and I heard no complaint of want of trade; and the best illustration I can give of the comfortable condition of the people of Wexford is, that during two days which I spent in the town, I was not once asked for charity. I do not mean to say, that there is not a pauper, or a person out of employment in Wexford; but it may be said that Wexford is a flourishing town. I only saw one thing to contradict this opinion—two or three unroofed and half ruined houses, which must have remained long in that condition, as the walls and window ledges were covered with wall-flower. The people of Wexford county generally, are said to be a money-getting people; and in the system which prevails extensively with regard to marriages, among the rural population, there is considerable evidence of this. The disposal of farmers' daughters is matter of regular traffic—acre for acre, or pound for pound—and so great is the difficulty of marrying girls without portions, that it is no unusual thing to find farmers, who are in comfortable circumstances, living as poorly as the common labourer, or the rack-rented tenant of a few acres, in order that

they may save a few hundreds for *fortuning off* their girls.

There are no public buildings in Wexford of any importance, excepting the gaol, which is large and handsome.

Wexford is a cheap place of residence. When I visited it, beef was 4*d.* per lb., mutton 5*d.*, veal 2*d.*, pork 2½*d.*, fine chickens 1*s.* a couple, and butter 9*d.* per lb. A fine Turkey may be bought during the season for 3*s.*, and other poultry in proportion; and there is a very plentiful and cheap fish market.

Before leaving Wexford, I devoted a day to an excursion into the Barony of Forth. This district and its inhabitants are familiar to every one in the south of Ireland; and are become by-words for all that indicates a superior order of things, and a superior race of people. The district commences close to the town of Wexford, and extends about fifteen miles in a south-west direction. The inhabitants were originally a South Welsh colony; and till but of late years, the language of Wales was generally spoken, and is still understood by some of the older people. But to this day, there

are other distinctive traits in both the physical appearance of the people, and the moral aspect of society among them, sufficient to denote their independent origin. The character of the people is universally reputed to be industrious, provident, peaceable, cleanly, and sober; and particularly exhibiting a pride in outward decency of appearance. I had heard much of this district and its inhabitants, and left Wexford early, in a jaunting car, to see all its singularities with my own eyes.

I found a country without any natural beauty, but with every thing else to recommend it. I saw universal tillage, good husbandry, and a comparatively comfortable people. The farm-houses and cottages,—for they are cottages rather than cabins,—are very thickly strewn; and, with few exceptions, the former are substantial, the latter clean and comfortable. I visited many of both; for anticipating, and always finding, as I every where have in Ireland, a ready welcome, I left the car, crossed the fields, and unhesitatingly lifted the latch. The farther I travelled into the district, the more striking became its characteristics; and not only did I find the interior of the houses comfort-

able; but in the flower-plots and little ornamental gardens, I recognized the traits which I have enumerated. In the husbandry of the district, there was every thing to commend. The land was well laboured and clean; the crops of wheat and of beans—the cultivation of which is extensively pursued here—were excellent; and a serviceable plough, with two horses and only one man, shewed some knowledge of the economy of labour.

But it must not be imagined, from what I have already said, that the people of the Barony of Forth are rolling in plenty; and that the condition of life is utterly different here from the rest of Ireland. This superior neatness, cleanliness, and apparent comfort, are more the result of a distinction in character, than of a distinction in condition. This pride of neatness and decorum has been matter of tradition; and is rarely forgotten in the children of the present day, whatever deterioration may take place in their condition. Neither, however, would I infer, that the difference is *all* external. Superior industry, and greater providence, have produced among the farmers an improved husbandry, and perhaps a somewhat larger capital;

and this again has been the means of giving more general and more regular employment to labourers; so that in this district, few are unable to find employment, though the wages of labour are not higher than in other places; nor, consequently, the mode of life greatly different. The potato diet here, is not so exclusive as elsewhere; barley bread is a good deal used; and among the females, tea is a very universal luxury.

Farms in this barony, run from ten up to fifty and sixty acres; but farms of thirty, and from thirty to forty acres, are the most usual: and with farm produce at its present prices, and with an average rent on arable land, of from 2*l.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* per acre, the farmer cannot do a great deal more than live, and pay his rent. I went into the house of a farmer owning forty acres, when he and his family were about to begin dinner. It consisted of potatos, butter-milk, sweet skimmed milk, barley bread and butter. The farm had been four generations in the farmer's family: his great-grandfather paid six shillings per acre, his grandfather ten shillings, his father one pound, and he paid two pounds. He said he could live as I saw him live, and pay his

rent, with his own and his son's labour, and lay by a trifle for his daughters.

Persons of different religious persuasions, live in the utmost harmony with each other in the Barony of Forth. Difference in creed, is unattended by any results on society;—and here also, the feuds and factions which in many parts prevail, and the personal collisions which result from them, are absolutely unknown.

The extreme point of my excursion into the barony, was about two miles beyond Broadway, which is indeed at the extremity of the barony; where there is a salt-water lake, a Catholic chapel, a ruin, and an island, which were once objects of religious superstition. In returning to Wexford by another road, I was greatly struck by the gay effect produced by the furze, or, as they are called in Scotland, the whin hedges, which form the only enclosures in this district. The furze hedges are very general in Ireland, and are much preferred by the people to every other, and not without reason. In parts of the country where turf is scarce and coal dear, the furze is a ready and abundant fuel: nor is this the only use to which it is put,—the

tender shoots are mashed, and given as food to the horses; and the refuse is mixed up and used as manure. There is still another use of a furze hedging. When full grown, it affords in rainy weather a shelter to live stock, which neither thorn nor any other hedge affords; for there are no drippings from a furze hedging. This is a fact of which any pedestrian may agreeably convince himself, if caught in a shower of rain, in the neighbourhood of a furze inclosure.

I noticed a singular usage in returning to Wexford. Passing by a farm-yard, I observed two horses greedily drinking milk out of a large pail. I of course stopped to make some inquiry respecting so unusual a spectacle; and I was informed, that the milk not required for the pigs, and the spare potatos, were always given to the horses, who liked the diet much, and thrived well upon it. I never observed this practice on any other occasion, or in any other place.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Bianconi and his Establishment—Memoir of Mr. Bianconi—Journey from Wexford to Waterford—New Ross—Land and Farmers—Con-acre—Tithe—Road to Waterford, and Cabins by the road-side—The Quay of Waterford—Export Trade of Waterford—Condition of the People—Landed Proprietors—Monk-houses—Whiskey-drinking and Licenses—Neighbouring Watering Places—Cotton Factory at Mayfield—Marquis of Waterford's Domain—The Beresfords—Carrick on Suir, and its poverty—The Duncannon Estates—Return to Waterford—Waterford Beggars—Journey to Kilkenny—Thomastown and its neighbourhood—Pigs, and a new light—Is Ireland an improving country?—A Holiday—Catholic Population—Land, and Middle-men—Leases—Excursion to Innistioge and Woodstock.

It is singular enough, that Ireland should be indebted to an Italian, for the establishment of a system of easy and cheap communication throughout all the south, and a great part of the west. The name of this public spirited individual, is Charles Bianconi,—and as it is at Wexford that the traveller finds himself for the first time within the range of Mr. Bianconi's establishment, I shall

make no apology for introducing in this place, just before availing myself of it, some little notice of the establishment, and of the establisher; and I will premise what I have to say, by mentioning that I am indebted for my information to Mr. Bianconi himself, to whose enterprise and public spirit, the people of Ireland are so largely indebted.

It has been incorrectly stated, that Mr. Bianconi came to Ireland as a print-seller: he was respectably connected in Italy; and being as a boy somewhat of a scape-grace, he was entrusted by his parents to the care of an individual, who was then setting out on a commercial journey to Britain. This individual, to whom was confided the power of breaking in his pupil, in whatever way he chose, chose to employ him in carrying small prints round the country for sale. This delegated drudgery continued during some time; and when the individual who had charge of the youth returned to Italy, Charles Bianconi found no choice but to remain on his own account. From twopenny prints he rose to sixpenny, and from sixpenny to shilling wares; and with its costliness, the weight of his burden increased.

It was while trudging, as he was often accustomed, between Waterford and Clonmel, that it first occurred to him, how agreeable it would be if any cheap conveyance passed along the road, to carry himself and his burden; and some indistinct project then began to be entertained, respecting the establishment of such a conveyance: but it has been erroneously stated, in some Memoirs of Mr. Bianconi that have from time to time appeared, that he set up a car to assist himself as an itinerant print merchant. Gradually he amassed a little money; but it was not until after he had taken advantage of then existing circumstances, to enter into the bullion trade, and had realized a little capital, that he started his first car. For some little time he met with but indifferent success; but gradually the public began to appreciate the convenience; and at length the success of the first car induced him to start a second; and to persevere, until he has become what he now is, one of the largest proprietors of horses and vehicles in Europe.

Clonmel is Mr. Bianconi's centre; and from thence his cars radiate in every direction—em-

bracing nearly fifty of the chief towns of the south and west; and not only following the high-roads, but connecting these towns with each other by the cross-roads. The establishment reckons between five and six hundred horses, and upwards of two hundred vehicles: and Mr. Bianconi is now the principal contractor besides, for conveying the mails on all the cross-roads of the south and west of Ireland. The whole establishment is excellently conducted. Every horse has his name; and the names are regularly entered in the way-bills. There is an hospital too, for the sick horses; and in his care of his four-footed favourites, Mr. Bianconi does not forget his other dependents. When his drivers become infirm or fall sick, they and their families are taken care of: and apart from his establishment, Mr. Bianconi is foremost in all that relates either to the amelioration of human distress, or to the improvement of his adopted town and country. About 200,000 stone of oats, and about 1400 tons of hay are consumed in Mr. Bianconi's establishment. I have omitted to say, that the vehicles used by Mr. Bianconi, are the regular juanting-cars, constructed on a large scale;—that the fares are extremely

moderate; and that on the principal lines of road, the rate of travelling is about nine English miles per hour.

I left Wexford, seated on one of Bianconi's cars, at seven A. M. Leaving Wexford, the country is agreeable, undulating, and fruitful; and looking back, I caught some charming views over the estuary, and along its banks. The cottages we passed, were neither of the best nor the worst description; they had generally some kind of windows, and the pig some kind of separate house. We breakfasted at a poor little place, the name of which I do not recollect, and proceeded on to New Ross, which we reached about mid-day; after passing through an uninteresting but a well cultivated country, chiefly under tillage, deficient in wood, and everywhere with whin enclosures.

New Ross is an old town situated on the Barrow, which here divides the county of Wexford from the county Kilkenny. The old town was mostly destroyed during the rebellion, and has since been partially rebuilt. This town lives chiefly by agriculture, and partly by the business created by the export trade, which commences here on the Barrow, to

be reshipped at Waterford. But notwithstanding these advantages, New Ross is any thing but a flourishing town: I remained a day there; and both by personal observation and inquiry, had sufficient proof of its poor condition. I found a very large number of the working classes without employment, and the street crowded with ragged mendicants. A considerable proportion of the land in this neighbourhood, is in the hands of middlemen, and is rented at from 4*l.* to 6*l.* an acre. I had not hitherto found the con-acre system common in the parts which I had already visited, but here I found it existed to a considerable extent. What con-acre means, is no doubt understood by many of my readers; but as there may be some to whom the term is not familiar, I will explain it. A farmer manures, ploughs, and in every way prepares a large field to receive a crop; a poorer description of persons, rent off portions of this field—a half, a quarter, or an eighth of an acre, for one season; and all that these persons have to provide, is the seed which they put in, and they take their chance of the produce. The rent paid for such portions is always high. In the neigh-

bourhood of New Ross, I found it to be from 10*l.* to 12*l.* an acre; and it may be said generally, that the rent is always calculated for the most favourable seasons. The poor man, however, who has no certain employment, and no means of living, undertakes to pay any rent, which, high as it is, a favourable season will enable him to pay; and if, on the contrary, he perceives that the crop is not likely to answer his purpose, he throws up his bit of land, and leaves the landlord to come upon the crop for the rent. I have known as much as 20*l.* per acre agreed to be paid for land, which was not only prepared, but seeded; and all labour also, being performed by the landlord.

I found in this neighbourhood, great fear among the landlords, that the tithe-bill, by which the tithe was proposed to be a land tax, would lead to a refusal to pay rent; and a strong disposition on the part of tenants, to resist tithe in every shape. I was shewn a lease, in which there was a clause to this effect,—that the tenant shall still be answerable for tithe, and shall be bound to pay it, *if the landlord be obliged to pay it.* The lease was of course invalid; but this clause shewed a doubt

on the part of both landlord and tenant, whether tithe would be in any shape recovered. The same individual shewed me a threatening notice which had just been sent. He had been desirous of letting at a higher rent, some land in the neighbourhood of New Ross, which had been previously let at 3*l.* 5*s.*, and had come from Waterford for the purpose; but a threatening notice had been served that morning, and he was unable to get a tenant.

The country between New Ross and Waterford is hilly, open, almost all under tillage, and not very thickly peopled. Both the farm houses and the cabins were of a worse description than I had yet seen in Wexford, and appeared to get worse as I approached Waterford. While the car was slowly drawn up the steep hills, I always took the opportunity of walking in advance, which permitted me to enter, or look into the cottages. In one, without chimney or window, or a particle of furniture, excepting two broken stools, I found an old infirm man at his breakfast of potatos and salt. This man was able to work but little, and was supported almost solely by going about the country begging of the farmers: he offered me a potato,

which I accepted; and I gave him in return—what I advise every traveller in Ireland to carry with him—a little tobacco. In another cabin, I found a woman working straw for bonnets. She said she could earn by her labour 1*s.* 3*d.* a week. Walking up one of the hills, I overtook about sixty boys and girls, who had been at mass. It was Saturday; and their parents being busy washing, had sent their children to chapel in their stead.

The road from New Ross to Waterford does not run by the river side, although the river runs to Waterford; and it is not until very near the city that the views improve, or that the country bespeaks any approach to a large town. The entrance to Waterford, however, is extremely imposing: the river Suir is crossed by a very long wooden bridge; and the first part of the town one enters, is the quay, which, whether in its extent, or in the breadth of the river, or in the beauty of the opposite banks, is unquestionably one of the very finest quays I recollect to have seen. At full tide, the views are indeed beautiful. The quay is little less than a mile in length; and the river is not much less than a quarter of a mile wide. The

opposite banks gently slope into green hills, well clothed with wood, and adorned with villas; and the church, called Christendom Church, with its fine surrounding trees, standing close to the water, adds greatly to the beauty of the prospect. The quay of Waterford reminded me of the quay of the Soane, at Lyons.

During the last fifteen years, Waterford has been an improving town; though that improvement has not been at all equal to what might have been expected from its trade; and at the time I visited it, the retail trade of the place was suffering from the low prices of farm produce, and consequent depression of the agriculturists. During the last nine years, the exports of Waterford have nearly doubled; and at present exceed two millions. But an export trade is not the most lucrative: in Waterford there are but few capitalists; the merchants, therefore, carry on their trade under very disadvantageous circumstances; and it is said, that not one twentieth per cent. of the value of the exports remains to Waterford.

Although there are very many unemployed persons in Waterford; and although the number of

infirm poor has made a mendicity society necessary; and although, as the reader will presently be informed by my personal observation, scenes of the utmost misery and destitution are constantly brought under the notice of any one who walks into the bye streets; yet, taking the circle of country round Waterford, I believe I am entitled from my inquiries, to say, that there has been some improvement among the people. In female clothing, the introduction of cotton has had the effect of improving cleanliness. Waterford stuff used to be the common material; and a gown made of this, would last six or seven years; and during all that time, the pin that fastened it up behind, was never taken out. This dress has been superseded by cotton, and there is therefore an improvement in cleanliness. In houses, the premiums offered by the agricultural society, have produced some improvement; and the abolition of the duty on coal, which is now pretty generally used in and about Waterford, has led to some improvement in the construction of farm houses, by creating a necessity for grates, and for chimneys of a better form. In food, there has been no improvement among the

labouring classes; the wages of labour will not admit of any: but in the town, and among the small farmers, potatos have, in some degree, yielded to wheaten bread. The wife of almost every small farmer carries a wheaten loaf back with her from market: and bread of a second quality is cheap, — the large export of the fine qualities leaving the inferior kinds for home consumption.

Taking a circle of ten or twelve miles round Waterford, the large properties are not so much over-let as the smaller. The estates of the Waterford, the Duncannon, and the Devonshire families, are not understood to be rack-rented; and are all under good management. The property in the worst condition, is that of Mr. Lane Fox, who grants no leases, and whose tenantry are mostly in arrear. I was much amused by learning the kind of presents which this absentee landlord made to his tenants' wives and daughters, on the occasion of a recent visit to his property. Supposing the county of Waterford, and the tastes and wants of its people, to resemble those of New Zealand or California, the good hearted, but mistaken landlord, visited his estates with pockets full of beads,

little mirrors, brooches, and other gew-gaws of a like kind.

While at Waterford, I made frequent excursions into the surrounding country; and sufficiently verified the fact, that the smaller properties were very much over-let. I found 5*l.*, 4*l.* 10*s.*, and even 7*l.* per acre, paid for small farms; and in all these cases, potatos formed the sole diet of the farmer, with occasionally the back-bone of a pig. This puts me in mind of a place in Waterford, called Arundel-square, where pigs' back bones, and all those parts not exported, are exposed for sale at three-halfpence and twopence per pound; and on Saturday evening, this square is filled with eager purchasers. There is no possibility of living, and paying such rents as I have mentioned. Many acknowledged that their arrears never could be paid; and that they had taken the land at such rents, merely as a refuge against starvation. This is universally the case where land is let by competition. Men who are unable to turn to any business but agriculture, will agree to pay any rent, so long as want of employment prevails to so enormous an extent.

There are in Waterford several large public institutions; particularly, a House of Industry, which appeared to be under good management, though the want of a separate place for lunatics, is very objectionable; and a mendicity society, the same in principle as that in Dublin, but exhibiting rather less filth and wretchedness. But the most important institution which I visited, was a Catholic school, at which upwards of seven hundred children were instructed. This is a new establishment, called by some, monk-houses; and is an association of young men, who dedicate their lives to the instruction of youth, and who call themselves "Brothers of the Christian Schools." It is, in fact, a monastic institution, bound by vows, like other orders: and although I am far from questioning the motives, either of the founder, Mr. Rice, or of the young men who thus make a sacrifice of themselves; yet I cannot regard favourably an institution under such tuition. I know too much of Catholicism, in other countries, to doubt, that intellectual education will be made very secondary to theological instruction; and although I am very far from ascribing all, or any large portion of the

evils of Ireland to the prevalence of the Roman Catholic faith, yet I would rather not see a system of education extensively pursued, in which the inculcation of Popish tenets forms the chief feature. These schools are established in many other towns besides Waterford; and where I meet with them, I shall not fail to notice them. There are at present, ninety members of the order of "Brothers of the Christian Schools;" and their number is rapidly increasing.

Whiskey drinking prevails to a dreadful extent in Waterford. There are between two and three hundred licensed houses; and it certainly does seem to me, that among the remedial measures necessary for the tranquillity and happiness of Ireland, an alteration in the licensing system is one of the most important. At present, the expense of a license increases with the respectability of the house that demands it, the expense being charged according to the rate; so a premium is thus offered to the lowest houses. This system certainly ought to be changed, and the price of licenses raised: government would lose nothing by this; for, although the number of licensed houses would be

reduced, the reduction would be amongst those houses which now encourage illicit trade.

Before leaving Waterford, I visited some of the worst quarters of the town, and was introduced to scenes of most appalling misery. I found three and four families in hovels, lying on straw in different corners, and not a bit of furniture visible; the hovels themselves, situated in the midst of the most horrid and disgusting filth. The heads of the families were out, begging potatos, round the country. I noticed among the inferior classes in Waterford—I do not mean the mendicant or destitute poor—too many evidences of idle, slovenly habits,—ragged clothes, which might have been mended; uncombed hair, which might have been in order; and even in the farm houses I observed, amongst a class who in England would have been neat and tidy, dirty caps and faces, ragged children, and an untidy and slatternly look about things, not warranted by the circumstances of the inmates.

The population of Waterford is about 30,000; of whom 25,000 are Catholics.

There are two watering places, or rather sea-

bathing places, in the vicinity of Waterford; Tramore, and Dunmore. I visited both, though they scarcely repay a visit. The road lies through an uninteresting country, and the places themselves are merely assemblages of indifferent houses. The seabeach at Tramore, however, is remarkably fine; and no shopkeeper at Waterford is entitled to hold up his head, who does not spend a few weeks with his family at Tramore.

A more interesting excursion is to Curraghmore, the magnificent domain of the Marquis of Waterford: and in the same neighbourhood, there are several other objects of interest; Mayfield, the extensive cotton factory of Messrs. Malcomson; the Besborough domain; and the town of Carrick on Suir. The road from Waterford to Curraghmore, lies through a very pleasant country, which becomes beautiful as the domain is approached. There is the fine broad river; the wide, well cultivated, and well wooded vale; and a magnificent oak forest stretching over an extensive district, as fine a specimen of forest scenery as any I know in England.

Before visiting Curraghmore, I applied for per-

mission to see the neighbouring cotton factory, and in order to get to it, passed through the village of Mayfield, which exhibited every sign of that improvement which might be expected, from the employment afforded by the adjoining manufactory. I found no fewer than 900 persons employed, of whom a large number were of course young persons: the wages of the boys and girls were from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 7*s.* per week; the upgrown persons worked at task-work, and might easily earn 1*l.* The most marked improvement has taken place in the neighbourhood, since the establishment of this manufactory: not in lodging only, but in food also, a great change has taken place; and although high wages, which leave a surplus, are some incentive to intoxication, it is a fact, that not an hour's labour is ever lost in the factory, owing to the dissipated habits of those employed in it.

The calico manufactured here, finds an advantageous market, not only in Ireland, but in England also, and is able to compete there with the fabrics of Manchester. It has been commonly said that Irish manufacturers cannot compete with those of Britain; but this establishment at May-

field *does* compete successfully; and with a sufficiency of capital, and an equally favourable situation, one would imagine that any other might be equally prosperous. The expense of erection is less than in England; labour is cheaper; and where there is navigation, the difference in the expense of conveyance to market, is but a small item.

I regretted deeply to learn, not from the proprietor of the mill only, but from other sources, that Lord Waterford's family have thrown every obstacle in the way of this establishment; and that, only the other day, an attempt had been made to take advantage of some manorial rights, and to demolish the mill dams. Pity it is, that the aristocracy should, even by open acts, separate themselves from the interests of the people around them. The enterprising Quaker who has established this factory, has done more for the neighbourhood, than Lord Waterford and all the Beresfords have ever done; and his lordship's pride ought to be, less in his magnificent domain, and fine stud, than in the comfortable condition of the surrounding peasantry, and in the establishment which has produced it.

It was only by dint of much importunity that I

succeeded in gaining admittance to the domain; but it is well worth the trouble of importuning. It is indeed a magnificent domain! It contains 4600 acres; and is one of, if not the very largest park in the United Kingdom. The River Clyde —not the noble river of the north; but a fine full stream nevertheless—traverses the park; and the timber by the river-side is of the most magnificent description, particularly the Norwegian firs, which I have scarcely seen surpassed, even on the banks of the Glommen in "old Norway." The house is not at all worthy of the domain.

The defeat of the Waterford family in the election for the county, was felt by them as a severe blow; but it has had its uses: more attention is now paid to the interests and comforts of the tenantry; and it is universally admitted, that the property has recently been, and is at present, under excellent management.

From Curraghmore, I proceeded to Carrick-on-Suir, driving through the park, which extends to within about three miles of the town. I know of few finer prospects than the valley of the Suir presents, as it opens upon one, from the heights

above Carrick. It is of great extent; of the utmost fertility; extremely well wooded; with fine mountains for a back ground; with a broad navigable river flowing through its centre; and adorned by many fine dómains. I do not think it is equalled by the Vale of Clwyd.

It rained torrents as I descended the heights towards Carrick, which nevertheless looked well, with its old bridge, and ivied castle, and pleasant environs; but, like many continental towns, there was a sad falling off on entering it. I was struck with its deserted, fallen-off appearance,—with the number of houses and shops shut up, and windows broken,—and with the very poor, ragged population that lingered about the streets. Nor were these appearances dissipated by farther opportunity of observation: I had not yet visited any town in a poorer condition than this. Carrick-on-Suir, once a town of great prosperity, and large stuff manufacture, and situated in one of the most abundant of districts, appears to be now distinguished—only by the extreme poverty of its population. I found the price of labour here, lower than I had yet any where found it. Sixpence to eightpence, without

diet (and even for temporary employment), was all that could be obtained; and, at this price, many hundreds of unemployed labourers could have been got by holding up one's finger. From all quarters I ascertained that a constant deterioration had taken place in the condition of this town, and its neighbourhood, during the last ten years: but, indeed, any one remaining a day at Carrick, and keeping his eyes open, need scarcely put the question "whether any improvement has taken place?" I have already said that the rents on Lord Waterford's, and on the Duncannon properties, are not rack rents: as much cannot be said for the smaller properties in this neighbourhood. Too many are disposed to let land to the highest bidder; though it must be admitted that, in many parts, it is impossible to carry that disposition into effect, owing to the danger of taking land over another man's head. Carrick, it will be recollected, stands partly in the county of Tipperary. I noticed, amongst other indications of the small means of the lower classes, stalls, set out with a miserable assortment of small bits of meat, the offal of pigs, chiefly; and much of the meat was in a state unfit

to be eaten. These morsels were sold at a penny, three-halfpence, and some of them, even as low as one halfpenny. Carrick-on-Suir, with all its poverty, may boast of excellent bread; I never ate better; and I may take this opportunity of saying, that the baker's bread generally, in the south of Ireland, is most excellent.

The condition of Carrick might be greatly bettered by improving the navigation of the Suir to Waterford; so that vessels of a larger tonnage might come up to Carrick, and load there. It is thought that the expense of deepening the channel would not cost above 4000*l.* or 5000*l.*: but, even this trifling capital is not to be had; because there is a want of enterprise, resulting from a want of public security,—a want that must continue to exist, so long as the mass of the people continue to be without employment.

The population of Carrick-on-Suir—I mean of the town parish—is about 10,000, of which number the Protestants amount to about 250.

I returned to Waterford, on the Kilkenny side of the Suir, that I might have an opportunity of seeing the Besborough domain, and the scenery

on the lower part of the Suir. Three miles on the road to Waterford, Besborough lies. The domain is remarkably well laid out; and the house, which is well situated, contains some good pictures, certainly well worth a *detour* of a few miles. The village of Pilltown, which stands on the road, close to, and, I believe, upon the Besborough property, is evidently a pet village: it is a row of cottages, adorned with evergreens and flowers; and is meant to convey, to the passer-by, the idea of snugness and comfort. I trust the noble proprietor has not contented himself with externals: I have no reason to think that he has; on the contrary, the Duncannon family are everywhere well spoken of. At the same time, in a country where I know that more than 4*s.* 6*d.* a week, without diet, cannot be afforded for labour, I look with some distrust upon these beautiful cottages; because I know that internal comforts cannot be in correspondence with external indications.

There are few more beautiful drives in any country, than that from Carrick to Waterford. The road keeps, for the most part, close by the fine broad river, which sweeps through a country

of amazing fertility and beauty; and the first view of Waterford, seen through an opening in the rocks that terminate a long reach of the river, is one of the most striking things I recollect to have seen.

I left Waterford, for Kilkenny, by way of Thomastown, travelling by the mail-coach as far as the latter place. There was a fearful congregation of beggars besetting the coach at its starting: and, although such scenes in Ireland are most harrowing to the feelings, it is sometimes impossible to help being amused, by the quick replies and insinuating ways of these sons and daughters of poverty. A commercial traveller chanced to be seated next to the door, and, while the coach waited for the mail-bags, he was assailed by a torrent of importunity. "One little sixpence, your honour! it 's but a half-penny a-piece for the poor crathurs." The young man answered, that he had nothing less than half-crowns. "May your honour never have less," said two or three together —wits really jumping. "I dare say," said he, "you would take my coat off my back." "And, if your honour gave it with good will, may be we would," said another.

There is nothing interesting in the country between Waterford and Thomastown. The land is generally under cultivation; but there is also some waste land, susceptible of all improvement; and the land that is under tillage, is by no means in the condition of which it is susceptible. The road from Waterford to Thomastown, runs the whole way through the county of Kilkenny, which it enters, immediately on crossing the bridge; and Thomastown is situated not very far from the centre of the county. The only bad inn I had yet seen in Ireland, I found at Thomastown.

The following morning betimes, I was looking about me; and there is indeed a great deal to be seen in the neighbourhood of Thomastown. The country is extremely pretty; there are a number of fine and extensive domains at no great distance; and several ruins are scattered here and there; the most interesting of which is at Jerpoint, about a mile from the town. Lord Carrick has a pretty park in the neighbourhood; and with Kilfane, the seat of Mr. Power, I was particularly pleased. At Kilfane, I saw some excellent pictures; and amongst them the celebrated portrait

of Napoleon, by Gerard. There must, I think, be a drawback on the enjoyment of the finest domain in Ireland.—All that the heart can desire, may be concentrated within its walls; nay, even the subject village may own the fostering protection of a kind hearted resident landlord. But beyond, all this disappears: private wealth and humanity, can extend their influence only to a limited distance; and beyond the circle of that influence, rags and beggary are found. I am led to make this observation here, because there are several resident landlords about Thomastown; and because there is but one opinion round the country, as to the worth of Mr. Power, as a resident landlord; and yet I found the condition of the people, *generally*, to be wretched. I met in my walks, wives and mothers begging about the country; carrying their sacks home with a few potatos, and under their arms a little bundle of sticks,—the only fire-wood they could afford,—picked up by the road side. These were not common mendicants; but, as I personally ascertained, were the wives and daughters of labourers, who could find no employment: many had not even the means of obtaining

seed to put into their little patches of potato ground. The cabins I found wretched in the extreme,—many *without even a pig in them.* This, I put in italics; for a new light had now begun to dawn upon me. I used to be shocked at seeing a pig's snout at a cabin door, and looked upon such a spectacle as a proof of wretchedness; but I now began to bless the sight, and to pity more, the poor wretches who possessed no pig. It is true, indeed, that things were still better when a pig-stye was visible; for that gave evidence both of the existence of the pig, and of the superior comfort of its owner: but still, it was always to me a pleasant sight, where, if no pig-stye was visible, I saw him that pays the "rint" walk leisurely in and out of the cabin door, or heard his comfortable grunt within. The greatest example of individual prosperity I observed among the poor in the neighbourhood of Thomastown, was finding three pigs resident in one cabin. It must be recollected, that at the time when these observations were made, labour ought to have been particularly in demand, for it was just the season for potato-planting.

I remained longer in Thomastown than the importance of the place itself demanded; but being a central point in Kilkenny, and having introductions in the neighbourhood, I availed myself of my position, to add to my own personal observations, the results of others' experience. I particularly inquired, of persons of all conditions and opinions, as to whether any improvement was discernible in the condition of the people, within the last twelve or fifteen years; and I regret to say, that I heard but one opinion: that a visible deterioration had taken place in the condition of the labouring classes and of the small farmers. How often do we hear the question mooted, Is Ireland an improving country? The reply ought to depend altogether on the meaning we affix to the word improvement. If by improvement, be meant more extended tillage, and improved modes of husbandry, — more commercial importance, evinced in larger exports,—better roads,—better modes of communication,—increase of buildings,—then Ireland is a highly improving country; but, up to the point at which I have arrived, I have found nothing to warrant the belief, that any

improvement has taken place in the condition of the people.

I passed a Sunday in Thomastown; and had of course an opportunity of seeing the population of a Kilkenny country parish, thronging to the Catholic chapel. Every woman wears a cloak, and the hood of every cloak is thrown over the head, unless the cap underneath be an extremely smart one; in which case, the hood is allowed to fall a little back; or if the cap be a non-such, it is altogether exposed. The habit of covering the head appears to be universal. If a girl is not possessed of a cloak, she will borrow the shelter of an apron, or even of a petticoat,—like the women of La Mancha: and in the dress of the men, I remarked also a resemblance to Spanish costume: notwithstanding that the weather was dry and mild, almost every man wore a great coat. The shops were crowded, after mass. All the country people who had money, flocked into the "stores," to buy some little thing,—the village dealers, to supply their retail trade; and others, to buy a little tea, sugar, or any thing else that domestic use required.

A considerable part of the land about this part of Kilkenny is in the hands of middle-men. I know of a large tract on lease for ninety-nine years, for which the landlord gets but 7*s.* per acre; but which is let by the middle-man at 2*l.* I know of other property let at 6*l.*, for which the landlord receives only 10*s.* I would not, however, from what I have said, be understood to pass any general censure upon middle-men. Many middle-men are excellent landlords; and middle-men, like those from whom they hold, ought to be judged by their individual character. So long, indeed, as the want of capital in Ireland, presents insurmountable obstacles to the improvement of land, and the occupation of larger farms, by which a more respectable tenantry would come in the place of middle-men, I scarcely think the utter extinguishment of middle-men would be an advantage; for the respectable portion of them are, in fact, the only body that at present forms any class separate from the aristocracy, and from the labouring, or at least, the industrious classes.

Some of the best landlords in this neighbourhood, are averse from granting leases: and although the

reason for this, assigned by them—viz. that leases destroy the influence of the landlord,—will scarcely be admitted in these days to be a valid one, there are other reasons which may be alleged in favour of the practice. If leases were not granted, there would be a less competition for land; and consequently, lower rents; and where there is a lease, ejectment is a more easy engine of despotism. Such a system, however, could only be successfully pursued by a landlord of the highest character, and by one who would, besides, lay out some money on a farm, as an earnest of his intentions; but would be quite unsuitable to a country where farmers possessed capital themselves, which they could not be expected to lay out, without a security for enjoying its return.

Before leaving Thomastown, I made an excursion to the village of Innistioge, and to Woodstock, the seat of Mr. and Lady Louisa Tighe; and which enjoys the just reputation of being one of the most beautiful domains in the south of Ireland. I could not but observe the ragged condition of the post-chaise that carried me there: the windows and window frames were broken; the lining in

tatters; and in place of a bit of carpet, the bottom of the vehicle was filled with straw; and yet, I believe ten shillings would have put all to rights. The road runs all the way by the river side; and the country, I found varied and beautiful. Innistioge itself is most picturesquely situated; and a quarter of a mile farther, is the entrance to Woodstock.

Having the advantage of an introduction to the family, I had, of course, more than the ordinary facilities for seeing the beauties of the place; and I found it every way worthy of its character. I was particularly struck with the extraordinary growth of the laurels, which are here great trees, affording depth and "continuity of shade;" and throughout the domain, the gifts of nature, which has been most bountiful, have not been thrown away; for they have all been consigned to the hands of taste.

Much might be effected, if resident Irish landlords would more identify themselves with the people. This, the proprietors of Woodstock have done; and as one proof of the influence of character, I may mention, that the Catholic children of the

village attend, without exception, the school under the superintendence of Lady Louisa Tighe; and which is taught by a Protestant. It is not enough that landlords be resident: absenteeism would be imperfectly cured, unless they were philanthropic also.

CHAPTER IV.

Journey to Kilkenny—Our Ignorance respecting Irish Towns —The Antiquities of Kilkenny—its Cathedral and Round Tower—Picturesque Ruins—the Castle—Condition of the People—Kilkenny Manufactures, and Mis-statements—The Repeal Question—Pigs and Dung-heaps—Kilkenny "Boys" —The Town of Callen, and its Proprietor, Lord Clifden— Some Facts and Opinions—The Aristocracy of Ireland— Journey to Thurles—Freshford and Johnstown—The Bog of Allen—Thurles, and its Inhabitants—The Ruins of Holy Cross—Journey to Cashel—Cashel, and the Rock of Cashel —The Archbishop—his Gardens—Another Round Tower— Market-day in Cashel—Pig-selling and Buying, and Irish Bargaining—Miserable Objects in Cashel—Country between Cashel and Tipperary—Outrage, and its Origin—Tithes— Competition for Land—Abduction—The Town of Tipperary, and Condition of the People—Mr. Stanley's Estates—Correction of an Error.

KILKENNY lies nine miles from Thomastown, and I hired a car to carry me thither to breakfast. In paying the hire of the car, before starting, I was obliged to request change of a 5*l.* note. The town was ransacked for five small notes in vain. Nobody had so much money: at length some one

thought of the parish priest, and the thing was done. A cultivated, but not an interesting country, lies between Thomastown and Kilkenny; but a mile or two before entering the city, the country improves, and exhibits the appearances which uusally indicate the approach to a place of some consequence. The entrance to Kilkenny is extremely imposing: one traverses no miserable suburb; but passes at once into a broad street, by a still broader highway, adorned by a double row of lofty trees, over which appear the towers of Kilkenny Castle, the residence of the Ormonde family.

Judging by myself, our ignorance about the second and third rate Irish towns is extreme. There are only some few we ever hear of. Leaving Cork, Waterford, Limerick, and Belfast out of the list, less I think is known of the other towns, unless by the gentlemen of the army, than of the same class of towns on the continent. Before the introduction of the Reform Bill, which somewhat enlightened us as to the size of towns, less was known of the Irish towns than now; but even yet, our ideas of Kilkenny, Clonmel, Athlone,

Mullingar, Mallow, Fermoy, Cashel, Thurles, Tipperary, Ennis, Galway, Sligo, and a host of others, are of the vaguest description.

I found the city of Kilkenny, a large, well-built, beautifully situated, and very interesting town. In fact, I scarcely know any town more interesting or more picturesque. There are many streets in Kilkenny, though only one principal one, where the best shops are situated; and although Kilkenny is not what it has been, it is still a little capital for this part of Ireland, and supplies both the surrounding gentry and the country dealers.

Kilkenny is full of interesting objects, and remains. In my first walk through the town, I saw for the first time, one of the "round towers." It is close to, and almost forms a part of the cathedral, a large ancient pile, surrounded by venerable trees. One must be an antiquarian, in order to be a thorough enthusiast in round towers; at the same time, the singular form, and great height, and dark hue, and known antiquity, and mystery too, attached to these pillars, must be striking to any one, however little of an antiquary. The dusky antiquity of the cathedral, and its

mysterious companion—unknown centuries older than all around it—were in striking contrast with the young green of the sycamore and beech trees, which were covered with their spring buds. The cathedral is inferior in size only to St. Patrick's, and Christ Church in Dublin; and the antiquarian will find inside, a good deal that is worthy of his attention, particularly the stone chair of St. Kievan, who is said to have preceded St. Patrick by twenty or thirty years, in his holy mission to christianize Ireland. There are also several sepulchral honours erected to the memory of members of the Butler family.

Nor are these the only interesting remains in Kilkenny: the ruins of the Franciscan Abbey exhibit some fine traces of the past; and the Dominican, or Black Abbey, still retains in good preservation its tower, some of the aisles, and other less perfect relics of its ancient perfections: another, the Augustinian monastery, constructed on a light and beautiful design, has been attempted to be converted into a place of worship, and although spoiled, yet shews some fine remains. But above all, the view from the uppermost of the

bridges over the Nore, is interesting; for it comprises all these objects—the town itself, interspersed with trees and with the spires of the churches; the cathedral, and its tall, dark companion; the ruins of the two abbeys; the river, and lower bridge; and, bounding the prospect in that direction, that fine structure, Kilkenny Castle,—its gothic towers rising above the surrounding wood. This baronial castle is full of historic associations. It was built by Strongbow, in the twelfth century; and two centuries afterwards came into the possession of the Earl of Ormonde, in whose family it has remained ever since. Little of the ancient edifice remains; and the present marquis is almost rebuilding it, preserving only the ancient towers. The family, to whom I carried letters of introduction, being unfortunately absent, I had only the privileges of a stranger in my visit to the castle.

But let me leave externals, and ask, in what state are the people of Kilkenny? I wish I could have contemplated their situation, with as much complacency and pleasure as I did the city itself, and the natural beauties that surround it: but I am compelled to say, that I found the most wide-

spread, and most aggravated misery. The population of Kilkenny is about 25,000; and I am enabled to state, after the most anxious inquiry, and close personal observation, that there were at the time I visited Kilkenny, upwards of 2000 persons totally without employment. It chanced that I was at Kilkenny just after the debate on the Repeal question; in which the prosperity of Ireland was illustrated, by reference to that of Kilkenny, of whose prosperous manufactures honorable mention was made, condescending even upon the number of water wheels at work, which were said to be eleven in number; and the carpet manufactory too, was spoken of in such terms, that it was said to be owing to its success, that the weavers of Kidderminster had petitioned for repeal. I visited these prosperous factories, immediately after the account I have mentioned was received: the principal of these factories used to support two hundred men with their families: it was at eleven o'clock, a fair working hour, that I visited these mills, and how many men did I find at work? ONE MAN! And how many of the eleven wheels did I find going?—ONE; and that one, not for the

purpose of driving machinery, but to prevent it from rotting. In place of finding men occupied; I saw them in scores, like spectres, walking about, and lying about the mill. I saw immense piles of goods completed, but for which there was no sale;—I saw piles of cloth at 2*s.* a yard, with which a man might clothe himself from head to foot for 10*s.*; but there were no buyers: the poor of Kilkenny are clothed from Monmouth-street:—I saw heaps of blankets, enough to furnish every cabin in the county; and I saw every loom idle. As for the carpets which had excited the jealousy and fears of Kidderminster, not one had been made for seven months; it was but an experiment, and had utterly failed: and just to convey some idea of the destitution of these people—when an order recently arrived, for the manufacture of as many blankets for the police, as would have kept the men at work a few weeks, bonfires were lighted about the country—not bonfires to communicate insurrection, but to evince joy, that a few starving men were about to earn bread to support their families. I speak warmly on this subject: but how can I speak otherwise than with warmth? Surely I need not

say, that I do not accuse any one of false invention, or wilful misrepresentation: but I accuse some one of having furnished to the advocates of the Union, *lies*, in place of truth. Their views required no such props: and I, who am no repealer, regret that an argument should be thus furnished to the repealers. The supporters of the Union, advance as an argument against the repeal of the Union, the prosperity of Ireland; and Kilkenny is quoted as an illustration of that prosperity. The statement turns out to be utterly false; and thus, the repealers boast, that they have a stronger case.

Having mentioned repeal, I may state, that as far as I have yet gone through the south of Ireland, I have found the whole of the lower, and a great proportion of the middle classes, repealers. By the middle classes, I mean the shopkeepers and farmers; I found Protestants of that class, who are indeed few in number, quite as much repealers as Catholics. I have generally found, however, a readiness to admit, that if employment were provided for the people, and any measure devised, which should have the effect of enticing, or forcing back absentees, repeal would lose its value.

Independently of the pauperism occasioned by the non-prosperous condition of the manufactures of Kilkenny, the whole working population I found in a miserable condition: hundreds subsisting on the chance contributions, which were levied on the farmers round the country; and hundreds more, subsisting at the very lowest point at which life can be sustained. The suburbs I found more wretched than any I had yet seen in any town: pigs were by no means a universal possession; and the chief wealth of the poor, seemed to be dung-heaps before their door. I do not speak in jest—the dung-heap insures a certain quantum of subsistence, in this way:—The con-acre system prevails here: and it is usual for the possessor of the land, to let it out in small patches, rent free, for one season, on condition of the patch being manured by the person who takes it. Thus a poor man may insure to his family the produce for a season, of as much land as he is able to put a sufficiency of manure into; so that I had now advanced a step farther, and was not only gratified by seeing a pig in a cabin, but also by the spectacle of a large dung-heap close to the door.

I ought not to have omitted to state, when speaking of the unprosperous state of the manufactures of Kilkenny, and of the assertion to the contrary; that while I write this, I have before me the original minute of a meeting held on the 6th of February, for the purpose of alleviating the condition of the poor, in which the population is spoken of as "wholly unemployed,"—so that the destitution of the people had existed months before the assertion as to the flourishing state of Kilkenny. The minute I allude to, is signed by the Mayor, by Dr. Kinsella, the Roman Catholic Bishop, and by the Protestant Dean, the Honorable and Rev. Joseph Bourke.

I spent part of a day on a race-ground, about four miles from Kilkenny, where some steeple races took place, and where a large concourse of persons was assembled. I was particularly struck with the difference in the display of luxuries, at an Irish and an English merry-making. Gingerbread and other dainties, are exhibited at a race or fair in England; here, I observed carts filled with good common household bread. This was deemed a luxury.

This being an assemblage of "Kilkenny boys,"

who, next to Tipperary boys, bear the best fighting character—I thought to have had it to say, "it 's there where one 'll see the fightin' that 'll do his heart good;" but several things prevented this exhibition. There was but little money among the lower orders, to buy whiskey; and torrents of rain had the effect of thinning the field. I saw plenty of "boys" with their shillelahs; but the fighting was only desultory. There were abundance of booths, and Irish pipes, and Irish jigs; and "boys" who appeared to have hired a fiddler for their own exclusive use, dancing a *pas seul* within a circle of admirers.

I must not omit to make mention of the beautiful black marble of Kilkenny, and of the better known "Kilkenny coal." The marble quarry is situated about a mile from the city; and there is a sawing and polishing mill also. The marble is extremely beautiful: it has a black ground, curiously variegated with madrepore, bivalve, and other organic impressions, and is used for chimney-pieces all over this part of the country. Kilkenny coal is well known by its qualities; the chief of which are, that it does not flame, or emit any smoke. Its

sulphureous exhalation, however, renders it utterly unfit for domestic use.

I had heard, even in England, of the wretched condition of a town in the county of Kilkenny, called Callen; and finding that this town was but eight miles from Kilkenny, I devoted a day to Callen. I never travelled through a more pleasing and smiling country, than that which lies between Kilkenny and Callen; and I never entered a town reflecting so much disgrace upon the owner of it, as this. In so execrable a condition are the streets of this town, that the mail coach, in passing through it, is allowed twelve minutes extra; an indulgence which can surprise no one who drives, or rather attempts to drive through the street; for no one who has the use of his limbs, would consent to be driven. And yet, will it be credited, that a toll is levied on the entrance into the town, of every article of consumption; and that not one shilling of the money so received, is laid out for the benefit of the town. The potatos, coal, butter-milk, with which the poor wretches who inhabit this place supply their necessities, are subject to a toll, which used to produce 250*l.* per annum; but which,

having been resisted by some spirited and prying person, who questioned the right of toll, the receipts have been since considerably diminished. It was with some difficulty that I obtained a sight of the table of tolls; but I insisted on my right to see it; and satisfied myself, that potatos and butter-milk, the food of the poor, pay a toll to Lord Clifden, who, out of the revenue of about 20,000*l.* per annum, which he draws from this neighbourhood, lays out not one farthing for the benefit of his people.

I had not yet seen in Ireland, any town in so wretched a condition as this. I arrived in it very early in the morning; and having been promised breakfast at a grocer's shop (for there is no inn in Callen), I walked through the outskirts of the town, and round a little common which lies close to it, and there I saw the people crawling out of their hovels,—they and their hovels not one shade better than I have seen in the sierras of Granada, where the people live in holes excavated in the banks. Their cabins were mere holes, with nothing within them (I speak of two which I entered) excepting a little straw, and one or two broken stools. And all the other outskirts of the town, are in

nearly a similar condition:—ranges of hovels, without a ray of comfort or a trace of civilization about them; and people either in a state of actual starvation, or barely keeping body and soul together. All this I saw, and cannot be deceived; and from the inquiries which I made of intelligent persons, the Protestant clergyman among the number, I may state, that in this town, containing between four and five thousand inhabitants at least, one thousand are without regular employment; six or seven hundred entirely destitute; and that there are upwards of two hundred actual mendicants in the town—persons incapable of work. Is there any one so blind as to contend, that this is a state of things which ought to continue; and that an absentee nobleman should be permitted to draw, without deduction for the support of the infirm poor, the splendid income which he wrings out of a people left to starvation or crime? An attempt was made by some philanthropic persons, to have the common enclosed and cultivated, which would have given some employment; but the project was unsuccessful. The great resisted it;—and again, will any one say, that Lord Clifden, or others situated like his lord-

ship, ought not to be *forced* to consent to a proposal tending to give employment to those of whom his own rack-rents and ejectments have made paupers? Let any one who desires to see a specimen of an absentee town, visit Callen. And Lord Clifden is the more reprehensible, since he occasionally visits the country, and is not ignorant of its condition. It is true, that his lordship drives as rapidly through his town as the state of the street will admit; but it happened fortunately, that upon one occasion, the carriage broke down; and this patriotic and tender-hearted nobleman, was forced to hear the execrations of the crowd of naked and starving wretches who thronged around him.

Nor is the country around Callen fortunate in its other landlords. The land of Lord Dysart, another large proprietor, is frightfully rack-rented. Land, at a distance from any market, is let at 4*l.* and 4*l.* 10*s.* per acre: and I know of five acres let at a rent, the whole produce of which would barely pay the rent of one acre. The Marquis of Ormonde is another proprietor; but his land is not so much over-set; and the general opinion appears to be, that he is anxious to do right.

I greatly fear that an angry feeling towards the lower classes, has been engendered amongst the aristocracy, by the result of the last elections, when old members were unseated, and repealers brought in. Some have been irritated by the conduct of their tenantry; and others have been hurt by what they conceive to be ingratitude. In some instances, there has been ingratitude no doubt; and that some irritation should have been produced, is only natural; but these are feelings which ought to be conquered. As a body, the landlords of Ireland have not been towards their tenantry what they ought to have been; and have long stood in need of much broader "hints" than those which *Blackwood* addressed to the aristocracy of England: and if, as the gentry of Ireland generally assert, the people were incited by their priests,—then it is unreasonable that anger should be excited against those whom they imagine to have been deluded. But I confess, that from all I have heard and seen, I have my doubts whether it be in most cases the priests that incite the people, or whether it be not rather the people that take the lead. I believe it will be admitted by all who

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have had the best opportunities of judging, that unless the instigations of the priest fall in with the wishes of the people, his influence is powerless; and instances have actually occurred, in which a priest, after having opposed himself to O'Connell and the repeal candidate, was scoffed at by his flock, and refused his accustomed dues. And for my own part, I am not at all surprised that a people suffering all the extremities of human privation, should catch at straws; and that Mr. O'Connell should find it an easy matter to raise a cry in favour of any thing which he asserts to be for the benefit of the people; so that on no ground are the aristocracy justified in visiting upon the people, the errors which have originated in ignorance,—or delusion.

I walked back to Kilkenny from Callen in the evening, without any fear of robbery, in a country where half the people are starving. Robbery, singular to tell, is a crime of unfrequent occurrence; and I look upon it, that a traveller is in less danger on the highways of Ireland, than in any other part of the British dominions.

Before leaving Kilkenny, I inquired the prices

of provisions; and found beef to be four-pence, mutton sixpence, bacon and pork two-pence, fowls 1*s.* a couple. A turkey in the season costs 2*s.* 6*d.*, a goose 1*s.* 10*d.* The club-house, or Hibernian Hotel, Kilkenny, is one of the very best I ever found in any country, London not excepted; and in order that the traveller may have some idea of the expenses of travelling in the south of Ireland, I shall state the prices of this hotel, which are much the same as those charged elsewhere. Accommodation, which consisted of a large and excellent bedroom and a well furnished private sitting-room fronting the street, 2*s.* Dinner, 2*s.* 6*d.*; tea, 1*s.* 1*d.*; breakfast, 1*s.* 8*d.* Wine and foreign spirits, the same price as in England; but the wine is generally better. A glass of whiskey-punch, five-pence. These prices vary but little over the south.

My object now was, to traverse the county of Tipperary, passing through that part of Kilkenny county which I had not yet seen. I accordingly left Kilkenny, on Bianconi's car, for Thurles, in the north of Tipperary.

A charming country lies between Kilkenny and Freshford, the first town on the road. The views, looking back on Kilkenny, are very striking; and the banks of the Nore, near to which our road lay, are finely wooded, and are adorned by several handsome country seats. I was everywhere delighted with the magnificent thorns, which, both in the hedges by the way-side, and as single trees in the neighbouring parks, were entirely covered with their white, pink, and fragrant blossoms. Freshford is a poor little place; but I saw multitudes of pigs, and mountains of manure about the doors. Driving out of Freshford, I was surprised to see so much manure lying uncollected on the high-road. In England it would have been all scraped up; and it is from such little things as this, that one is forced to admit the less industrious habits of the people; and that, bad as their condition is, they do not make the best of it.

From Freshford to Johnstown, where we stopped to breakfast, the country is less interesting;—the fields were so completely covered with daisies, that they appeared as if spread over with lime; and I observed a greater quantity of pasture land than I

had usually seen. Beyond Johnstown to Urlingford, three miles farther, the country gets poorer; and Urlingford stands almost on the skirts of the Bog of Allen,—a branch of which we soon after entered.

Of all the bogs of Ireland, we hear most in England of the Bog of Allen; the reason of which is, that it is the largest,—extending through a great part of the centre of Ireland; and although separated and intersected by belts of arable land, by gravel hills, and by reclaimed portions of land, is, with all its branches, one bog—the bog of Allen. The branch which we crossed, extended about twelve miles to the left; and to the right it broke into several branches, extending to a much greater distance. It presented a dreary expanse of dark brown herbage, here and there broken by heaps of dry turf; here and there too, little patches had been reclaimed; and wherever there was an elevation, it was covered with the finest green, agreeably relieving the monotony of the reddish brown level around. The houses erected on the skirts of the bog, were wretched in the

extreme; and the people in the lowest scale of humanity.

I am not competent to write on the reclamation of the bogs of Ireland; but I believe it has been fearlessly asserted, by those fully competent to give a sound opinion, that a very large part of these bogs is reclaimable, at an expense of 7*l.* per acre. Twenty millions have lately been given to the West India planters; some say, to extinguish a name, and make good a theory. At all events it is undeniable, that the condition of the Irish poor is immeasurably worse than that of the West India slave: and if but seven millions were thrown upon the bogs of Ireland, a million of acres might be reclaimed; and employment and food afforded to the hundreds of thousands who now, for want of employment and bread, disorganize the country, force absenteeism, tax the people of England for the preservation of law and order, and peril the very existence of the empire.

We were now in the county of Tipperary, which, in approaching Thurles, is an uninteresting country. Thurles cuts some figure at a distance, owing to the new and very handsome Roman

Catholic chapel, and the unfinished Roman Catholic college. The town stands on a wide, scantily wooded, and uninteresting plain. It contains about eight thousand inhabitants, and is a tolerably prosperous town; for, having no larger town nearer to it than forty or fifty miles, it supplies an extensive interior district, and is besides an important market for country produce. There are no fewer than fifteen fairs, and two weekly markets held at Thurles. I saw scarcely any beggars in this place; and the cabins in the outskirts were not of the worst kind. There are two nunneries in this town; in one of them, there are twenty nuns and sixty boarders. I also found here, one of the schools belonging to the Roman Catholic institution, of which I have already spoken.

Besides the absence of beggars, I saw several other indications of an improving town. I observed no shops to be let, and I saw several houses in course of being built. Land is high let about Thurles, but it is good land; and farmers paying 3*l.*, 4*l.*, 5*l.*, and even more per acre, admitted that they could live, and pay their rents, unless in unfavourable seasons. When we speak of land in

Ireland being high set, we speak of course with reference to the capital and skill brought to bear upon it. If more skill or capital were, or could be thrown upon much of the land in Ireland, it could well bear the rents now exacted; and if the means of communication were multiplied and improved, and if, by the more general employment of the people, agitation were, as it necessarily would be, diminished, absenteeism checked, and capital attracted to Ireland, there can be no doubt that the present just complaint of high rents would be less frequent; because the skill and capital thrown upon the land, would increase its value to the occupier. And it need scarcely be added, that the employment of the agricultural population, and the investment of capital in other speculations, would operate in diminishing the rent of land, by diminishing the competition for it.

I found the price of labour a shade higher in this part of Tipperary than in Kilkenny: as much as eight-pence was given with diet, and one shilling without diet: but I do not speak of constant employment; and it must not be forgotten, that this was the season of potato planting.

Prices of provisions here, I found precisely the same as at Kilkenny.

A fire broke out in Thurles, the night before I left it, and several houses were consumed. An immense concourse of persons was present; and there was more noise than work; and strange to tell, the town was unprovided with a fire engine. The lower orders of Irish have much feeling for each other. It is a rare thing to hear an angry, or contemptuous expression, addressed to any one who is poor: commiseration of the destitute condition of others, is largely mingled in their complaints of their own poverty; and it is a fact, that they are most exemplary in the care which they take of their destitute relatives, and in the sacrifices which they willingly make for them. In the crowds which thronged the streets of Thurles, during the conflagration, loud and general were the lamentations for the poor "crathurs" who lost their little all.

About three miles from Thurles, is to be seen one of the finest abbey remains in Ireland. It is called Holycross; and as it lay on my road to Cashel, the next point at which I purposed halting, I left

Thurles in the afternoon, to be taken up by the car to Cashel in the morning, and spent the evening at Holycross, in and about the ruins. They are very extensive: and even to one not an antiquarian, highly interesting, both from the general outline of the ruins, their towers, chapels, and arches; and from the beauty of some of the architectural remains within, particularly two monumental relics which adorn the choir—one conjectured to be intended as a receptacle for the fragment of the true cross, originally presented to this abbey; the other—very beautiful in its design —supposed to be a mausoleum of one of the Ormonde family.

Next morning I proceeded on my journey. From Holycross to Cashel, I passed through as fine and fertile a country as it has ever been my fortune to see; thickly peopled, and abounding in hamlets and cottages. The celebrated rock of Cashel, crowned with its magnificent ruins, is seen many miles distant; but the city (for Cashel is a city) is not seen until one is just entering it.

Cashel is rather a pretty town: the principal street is wide and well built; but the place is far

from being in a flourishing condition. It was formerly a place of much resort, and consequent prosperity; but it is now almost entirely an absentee town; and I found every thing extremely dull, and things getting daily worse. Wages were here only eight-pence a day without diet, and numbers were altogether without employment. The population of Cashel is, at present, about 7000; and the number of Protestant communicants about 150. I was sorry to hear bad accounts of the Protestant archbishop. I found him universally disliked, even by those dependent upon him, and of the same religious persuasion. He does no good; and by all accounts, is a close hard man, in every sense far overpaid by the 10 or 12,000*l.* a year which he enjoys. He has the disadvantage, indeed, of being compared with his predecessor, whom all, Protestant and Catholic, unite in praising.

Notwithstanding the just dislike which I imbibed of this high dignitary, I did not deny myself the enjoyment of his lordship's gardens, in which I spent a charming morning. All that can delight the senses, is here. Parterres of lovely flowers, and rare shrubs; velvet lawns; secluded walks rich

in odours; and above the fine screen of holly and laburnum, and lilac, and copper-beech, and laurel, towers the rock, and the magnificent ruin that covers it. There is a private door through his lordship's grounds, communicating with the rock; in order that, unobserved by his numerous flock, he may retire to this solemn spot, and meditate on the insufficiency of earthly enjoyments. The archbishop has a palace, as well as a garden; but it is reported that he means to reside in Waterford in future, where his flock will be larger, and his range of usefulness, therefore, more extensive.

The rock of Cashel is generally considered to be the finest assemblage of ruins which Ireland contains. The height itself, on which the ruins stand, is a rocky elevation,—covered, however, with the most beautiful grass; rising abruptly out of the plain, and standing close to the town. The ruins cover the greater part of the elevation; and whether to the antiquary, or to the mere lover of the curious and the picturesque, exhibit in their varied architecture, and various antiquity—in their Saxon arches, and Norman arches—and in the "round tower," which is also a part of them, one

of the most interesting objects of contemplation that is anywhere to be found. The round tower, though forming a part of these ruins, differs from all that surrounds it; not merely in its form, but even in the material of which it is built—the other ruins being of limestone, but freestone being the material of the tower.

The view from the summit of these ruins, or even from the elevation on which they stand, is equally beautiful and extensive. The whole county of Tipperary is spread out below—one beautifully variegated plain, richly cultivated, and bounded by the Galtee and other mountain ranges; while immediately below, the beautiful pleasure grounds of the bishop — their lawns, parterres, borders, clumps, and shrubberies, in all their varied livery of green, lie like a piece of mosaic work.

The second day I spent at Cashel, was market day; and among other sights, I was greatly amused by the country people driving bargains for pigs. A man, a pig-dealer, would come to a countryman who held a pig by a string. "How much do you ask?"—"28*s*." the answer might be. "Hold out your hand," says the buyer; and the

proprietor of the pigs holds out his hand accordingly: the buyer places a penny in it, and then strikes it with a force that might break the back of an ox: "Will ye take 20*s.*?" The other shakes his head—"Ask 24*s.* and see if I 'll give it ye," says the pig-merchant. The owner again shakes his head. It is probable that by this time, some one among the bystanders—for there is always a circle formed round a bargain-making,—endeavours to accommodate matters; for it is another instance of the kindly feeling towards each other, that all around are anxious that the bargain should be concluded. Again, the merchant says, "Hold out your hand," and again a tremendous blow is struck, and a new offer made, till at last they come within a shilling perhaps of each other's terms; when the bargain is struck; and the shilling about which they differed, and probably two or three others, are spent in whiskey punch "screeching hot."

Sitting in the evening at the window of the inn, I saw a sight such as I never saw in any other part of the world—a lad twelve years of age, and upwards, naked in the street. I say naked: I do not mean without a rag; but I mean so entirely in rags, that

he might as well have been stark naked. All he had on him was a jacket, and a few tatters of a shirt, hanging in stripes here and there. Public decency would not permit such a sight in England; and viewing such a spectacle, one is tempted to ask, is there no clergyman, no magistrate, no decent man, in Cashel, who, for the sake of sheer modesty, would throw a pair of trowsers to the ragamuffin.

When I was at Cashel, potatos had become so dear, that bread was partly substituted for them by the poor. A baker's shop chanced to be situated precisely opposite to the inn; and I saw very many children buy a halfpenny worth of bread, and divide it into two or three pieces, for the supper of as many. Neither here, nor in many other parts of Ireland, is bread sold by weight. There are loaves at 3*d*., 4*d*., &c.; and these are cut into two or four pieces. The large loaves are not weighed; and as the size of the loaf is no criterion of the quantity of flour put into it, great imposition is doubtless practised.

I now left Cashel, for the town of Tipperary. Tipperary county, with the exception, I believe, of some parts of Limerick, is considered to contain

the finest land in Ireland; and, certainly, nothing can exceed the fertility and abundance which are spread over the fields. Golden Bridge, which lies about four miles on the Tipperary road, from Cashel, is reputed to be one of the most disturbed spots in Ireland; and here have been perpetrated some of those inhuman acts, at which humanity shudders. It was here that the Rev. Mr. Whitty was barbarously murdered; and here, where, in open day, two men, with blunderbuses, entered a field, where many were at work, and asked for Jack Sullivan; and, having found the individual they were in search of, placed him on his knees—shot him stone dead, and walked away unmolested.

This, I think, is the first time I have mentioned the subject of outrage. I might have mentioned it twenty times, if I had given ear to all the stories and reports which are circulated. That there is much exaggeration, no one who travels through Ireland, and inquires upon the spot, can doubt: but that frightful examples of ferocity, hatred, and revenge have occurred, and do occasionally occur, is but too certain: and, from every respectable quarter, I heard but one opinion as to the necessity

of a Coercion Bill. Almost every outrage and murder that has disgraced Ireland, has arisen out of one of two causes—either competition for land, or tithes; and, until means be found for reducing the former, and till the latter be finally and justly settled, it will be in the power of any restless, wrongheaded, or interested man to agitate Ireland. Competition for land can only be diminished by employing the people; but I greatly fear, that no scrutiny, however strict and impartial, into the revenues of the Protestant church, and that even no application of the surplus, will be satisfactory to the land occupiers of Ireland. Here, as every where else, in the south, I heard the strongest objections to tithe in any shape; and a curious instance came to my knowledge, of the determination of farmers to get rid of tithe. A farmer agreed to pay 30*s.* an acre for a certain quantity of land; the landlord being bound to pay tithe and all other dues. On rent day the tenant arrives, and, before paying his rent, asks what tithe the landlord pays? "Why do you wish to know that," says the landlord, "what is it to you what tithe I pay? you pay me 30*s.*, and I take tithe and every burden off

your hand." "I know that," says the farmer; "but I'll not only not pay tithe myself, but your honour sha'nt pay it either." The tenant offered the landlord his rent, deducting whatever tithe he, the landlord, paid; and the rent is, at this moment, unpaid.

I said, that all acts of outrage, or atrocity, were to be traced to competition for land, or the aversion to tithes. There are, however, in this county of Tipperary, some few other causes of less frequent occurrence. Abduction is one of these; and this is always a cause of deadly feud: and there are also factions, which are of long standing,—existing without any intelligible cause; but which are even inheritances: and although these are not the origin of deliberate murder, they are the occasion of those fights, which almost invariably take place at fairs, when persons of different factions meet; and which too often terminate in bloodshed.

All the way to Tipperary, the same rich country is seen on both sides of the road; and about half way, I passed by the fine domain and seat of the late Lord Landaff; which I did not stop to walk over; but which, next to the domain of

the Marquis of Waterford, is said to contain the greatest quantity of valuable timber.

Tipperary is most agreeably situated, in a fine undulating, smiling country; and within a few miles of a beautiful range of hills, which divides the counties of Tipperary and Limerick. Tipperary, though inconsiderable in size, to bear the name of the county, is rather a flourishing town; and is, what a mercantile traveller would call, "a good little town." There is no town westward, nearer than Limerick; and there is, consequently, a busy retail trade, the result of country wants. There is also a good weekly market, which makes Tipperary the depôt of agricultural produce, for a range of twelve or fifteen miles round. Owing to the low price of agricultural produce, the retail trade was somewhat dull when I visited Tipperary; but it was supposed it would revive the ensuing winter. Notwithstanding the better circumstances of the tradesmen, the condition of the labouring classes I found little better than elsewhere. Not so large a proportion of the people were out of employment here, as in some other places; but wages were only eight-pence a day, without diet;

and I ascertained that there is no constant employment for all, or any thing approaching to all, the population. I certainly observed fewer ragged people, and fewer beggars, in Tipperary, than in Cashel, and many other towns; but in searching the suburbs, I found many cabins wretched enough, and enormous rents paid for them. Some paid 4*l.*, none less than 2*l.* 10*s.*, and the average rent might be 3*l.*

The con-acre system is very general in the neighbourhood of Tipperary, and very popular. They looked upon it as the only refuge which many a man had against starvation. The rents paid, were at the rate of from 10*l.* to 12*l.* an acre; and a guinea per quarter was generally paid in advance. Here, therefore, the system is on a more unfavourable footing for the renter of the con acre; for before he can avail himself of it, he must be possessed of a little capital; and the farmer has security against his tenant relinquishing his possession.

The number of resident gentry about Tipperary is considerable; though some of the largest proprietors are absent,—I will not say absentees,—for

that, I think, is not the term to apply to those who have their chief possessions in England. All that can be expected from such individuals, is, to have proper resident agents; and occasionally to visit their properties. Many absentee properties are quite as well managed, as if the proprietors were resident: and as one example of this, I may name the large estates of Mr. Stanley, in this neighbourhood. I found only one opinion as to the excellent management of these estates;—rents are moderate, and the tenantry well treated; and from my own observation, I can speak to the generally comfortable condition of things upon this property. A reading society, of which I believe the agent upon the property is librarian, has been instituted for the benefit of Mr. Stanley's tenantry; and the project, I understood to be perfectly successful.

I found every thing perfectly quiet and orderly in the neighbourhood of Tipperary. The very name forces to our recollection, images of shillelahs, and broken heads, and turbulence of every kind; and I found it readily admitted, that the fighting propensities of the Tipperary boys are somewhat remarkable. I recollect dining in Dublin, with a large party, at which were present some grand

jurors of what are called the disturbed counties; and the conversation turning upon employment for the poor, as a means of lessening agitation, it was objected, that in the counties of Tipperary and Kilkenny, where it was asserted there is the most employment for the people, there is also the most disturbance. In the first place, it is utterly false, that in these counties, there is employment for the people; the fact rather is, that the more frequent disturbance in Tipperary than elsewhere, arises rather from the opposite cause,—as it is natural it should. The soil is so fine in this county, that less industry is required, in order to obtain a return for land; and the holders of small bits of land, have, therefore, more time upon their hands. Another reason is, that the population is more concentrated: and it may also be stated, that illicit whiskey—one fruitful source of outrage—is cheaper here than elsewhere, owing to the low price of grain in this grain county; which has unfortunately induced producers of grain to turn their attention to illicit distillation, by which they can make larger profits than in the grain market.

The population of the town of Tipperary is about 8000; of whom, about 700 are Protestants.

CHAPTER V.

Journey to Clonmel—Cahir, and its beautiful neighbourhood —Lord Glengall—The Catholic Chapel, and a Scene—The Priesthood—Condition of the People—Scenery of the *Suire* —Fine Gardens—Cahir Fair—Weddings in this part—Road to Clonmel—Prosperity of the Town—Trade of Clonmel—Corn Mills in England and in Ireland—Mr. Bianconi—Employment of Labour—Religious Sects—General indications of prosperity—Libraries—Public Institutions—State of Society in the Southern Counties—Environs of Clonmel —Journey to Mitchelstown.

I left Tipperary, for Cahir and Clonmel, the evening following my arrival.

It is utterly impossible to conceive any drive more beautiful than this. The Galtee range of mountains lay to the right, at but a short distance; and these, under a sinking sun, exhibited the most beautiful diversities of light and shade. The nearer heights, sometimes close to the road, were covered with thriving plantations; magnificent parks, with the finest timber scattered over them, were

passed by in succession; and finer crops of grain, or more beautiful grass, eye never rested on.

Cahir, where I arrived a little after sun-set, is charmingly situated: I am not sure that I do not prefer its picturesque beauties to those of Avoca. There is every constituent of the picturesque—wood, a fine river, a bridge, ivied ruins, and a magnificent back-ground of mountains. The view, from the windows of the inn, embraces all of these. The fine domain of Lord Glengall commences just at the back of the town; and, with the Suire running through the centre of it, abounds in scenes of beauty. Lord Glengall has not of late had much in his power; but great expectations have been formed, from his lordship's late alliance, and from his avowed intention of residing on his property. The land on this property is not considered to be much over-let. It averages, to the actual possessors, about 40*s.*; and is generally excellent land. Lord Glengall, himself, does not receive anything like this average, a great part of the estate being in the hands of middle-men.

The town of Cahir lies on the side of a hill; and is adorned by two very pretty spires; one,

belonging to the new Protestant church, a handsome little edifice; the other, appertaining to the Catholic chapel, a grander and far larger edifice. A considerable number of the most recently erected Catholic chapels have spires, which, in height and architecture, quite eclipse those of the churches of the Establishment.

I am sorry to be obliged, in this place, to record a fact, to which I could not have given credit on any evidence, less conclusive than that of my own eyes. The Roman Catholic chapel is newly erected, and is yet unfinished: and I was told, that the anxiety to obtain funds for its completion, gave rise to the enaction of some curious scenes at the door. I went there, about ten o'clock; and I certainly did witness a scene of a most singular kind. The gates were shut, and four men stood by. One had a silver salver, to receive the larger contributions: two were provided with wooden ladles, for the copper offerings; and these they shook in the ears of every one who approached: and one man, the priest, stood, just within the gate, armed with a shillelah. *No one was admitted who did not contribute!* I saw a man attempt to pass without

contributing; and I saw the priest push and buffet the man, and, at length, strike him several times with his stick, and knock his hat off his head! This is no matter of hearsay. I saw it: and I saw from thirty to forty persons kneeling outside of the gate, on the high road,—poor persons, who had not a halfpenny to spare. To be more and more sure that this was the cause of their remaining without, I gave some halfpence amongst them, and saw them admitted.

The influence of the Catholic priesthood in this neighbourhood is great; but, from all that I could learn, and from conversations I have myself held with the lower classes, I have some reason to think it is on the decline. An instance occurred, only a few days before I left Tipperary, in which a Catholic priest, who attempted to interfere in a fight, was set upon by both parties, and treated with very little reverence.

Mr. O'Connell's proposition, respecting the allowances to the Roman Catholic clergy, created a great sensation in this part of Ireland: the priests generally affirmed their hostility to the proposal; but I should take the liberty of greatly doubting

whether that hostility would be very obstinate, in case of the proposal being actually before them, for acceptance or rejection. Some are of opinion, that its acceptance would be a death-blow to Catholicism; but this opinion must not be taken up too hastily: so long as dues are exacted by the priest, for the performance of those offices, upon which the people consider their title to heaven to depend, so long will the priest receive these dues; and so long, therefore, will a large portion of influence be retained.

Cahir is rather an improving place. The flour trade is pretty extensively carried on, both in grinding, and in carrying to Clonmel. Very extensive corn mills have recently been erected; and they are in full employment. About 80,000 barrels of wheat were brought into Cahir last year; and the trade is on the increase. But, notwithstanding this trade, want of employment is felt in Cahir. I noticed, on Sunday, in coming from church, the street crowded with labourers, with spades and other implements in their hands, standing to be hired; and I ascertained that any number of these men might have been engaged, on constant employment, at 6*d.* per day, without diet;

for partial employment 6*d.*, with diet, or 9*d.* without diet, was usually given.

I remained some little time at Cahir, and in its neighbourhood; and was delighted with the scenery on the Suire. I shall not soon forget the charming scenes which a day, spent with some hospitable friends, introduced me to. The climate, in this part of Ireland, must be very favourable to the productions of nature; and, after seeing a garden in this neighbourhood, I found reason to think, that I had overrated the exclusive capabilities of Guernsey and Jersey. In the garden, to which I allude, I found azalias in the utmost perfection; magnolia; aloe; camellia; arbutus, quite a tree; evergreen magnolia; myrtle; althea frutex; daphne; rhododendron, of all colours; and from thirty to forty species of holly, in flower; besides innumerable fine specimens of laurel and bay. All of these were growing in the open air, and without flower-pots.

The whole valley of Suire, here, is beautiful: there are deep woods, and green slopes; and a sparkling river; and two fine mountain ranges—the Galtee and the Lismore hills; and, if one descends as far, the ruined castle of Ardfinane, and its village,

the property of Lord Donoughmore, who sadly neglects it. A great part of the population is Protestant; and the place is, altogether, miserably poor.

It chanced to be the fair at Cahir on one of the days I spent in its neighbourhood; but the unfailing accompaniment of Tipperary fairs—fighting—seldom takes place at Cahir; for there are extensive cavalry barracks, and a regiment of dragoons within five minutes ride of Cahir. One does not see so much rustic gallantry at an Irish, as at an English fair. In fact, from all that I could learn, marriage in this country is a very commercial concern; arranged by parents; and, respecting which, there is as much higgling as about any other bargain. Girls are extremely obedient; and sometimes never see the bridegroom until the moment of the marriage; for it not unfrequently happens that the girl's father, and the intended husband differ, about a pig, or a chair, or a table, less or more; and another "boy," who chances to stand in need of a wife, making a more liberal offer, he is accepted, and the first lover discarded.

On the night of the fair I returned to the town,

about midnight, having been dining in the country, a mile or two distant. I met several persons on the road, but no interruption or insult of any kind.

I left Cahir, at an early hour in the morning, for Clonmel, the largest town in the county of Tipperary, and one of the most important towns in the interior of Ireland. After a charming drive of nine miles, through a very agreeable and improving country, I passed under the gateway of Clonmel, and alighted at "the Great Globe."

At once, on entering Clonmel, one perceives a hundred indications of an improving town. This was truly refreshing, after Kilkenny, Cashel, and the many other wretched places I had passed through, and sojourned in. For the last fifteen years the prosperity of Clonmel has been steadily increasing, and it is, at present, a decidedly improving town. It is the great point of export for the county of Tipperary,—which is one great granary,—as well as for parts of other counties; for it is the first point at which water carriage commences.

The chief branches of the trade of Clonmel are, the corn trade, the bacon trade, and the butter trade. The first of these is very large, not fewer

than between two and three hundred thousand barrels of wheat being annually brought into Clonmel. The corn mills in, and about Clonmel, are upon a very extensive scale, and are very numerous. A corn mill in England is, generally, a little picturesque building, crossing a rushing stream, and employing "the miller and his men,"—some half dozen perhaps. Corn mills at Clonmel, are very different things; they are like the great factories, or mills, which we find in the English manufacturing districts, and employ almost as many persons.

The bacon trade here is also very extensive,—not fewer than 50,000 pigs being on an average killed in one year. Last year, some considerable diminution in this trade took place; owing probably to several conspiring causes;—among which may be named, a preference in England of English curing; the abrogation of the duty on salt, which lessens the expense of English curing; and the constantly increasing facilities of steam conveyance, for the export of the live pig. The butter trade, which is still large, has lately been somewhat on the decline. It is common in Clonmel, for all these three branches of trade to be united.

Clonmel has other inferior branches of trade, which give considerable employment. There is a very large distillery in the neighbourhood; as well as several breweries; there is also a branch of the calico manufacture: and I must not omit, amongst the sources of employment and prosperity, the establishment of Mr. Bianconi, of which Clonmel is the head quarters; for it is obvious, that the care of so many horses,—the wages paid to so many men,—the building, and painting, and repairing of so many cars, — the making and mending of so much harness,—must give profitable employment to a great number of persons. Clonmel would be greatly advantaged by the improvement of the navigation of the Suire, which only admits boats of small tonnage up to Clonmel. But this, I fear, is a distant prospect; since it would require a larger sum to effect it, than for some time at least, is likely to be vested in Irish improvements. There are not, in Clonmel, many able-bodied labourers out of employment; destitute persons are of course found, and some mendicants; though the number is few, considering the size of the place: labourers, however, live little better

here than they do elsewhere: and a great part of the higher wages of artizans, is spent in whiskey. In Clonmel, there are no fewer than 160 licensed houses.

I was pleased to learn, that great harmony exists in Clonmel, between Catholic and Protestant. They live very amicably *together*. The population of Clonmel is about 18,000; of whom, about 15,000 are Catholics, — the remaining 3000 being of various sects. There are about 1800 Episcopalians, and a considerable number of the Society of Friends; the members of which, in Clonmel, are generally prosperous, and somewhat aristocratic. I noticed among the Quakeresses, more smartness of dress, and a greater disregard of the strict *costume*, than in any other place I ever visited.

The population of Clonmel wears a respectable look; one sees few ragged and bare-footed people, and few idlers. There is an appearance of something doing; a bustle and throng, evidently arising from people having an object in view. The shops, too, are good, well filled, and well frequented. Nor must I omit another unequivocal sign of improvement. I found two very respectably

stocked booksellers' shops, and two respectable circulating libraries. These were the first libraries I had seen, since leaving Kilkenny: neither at Thurles, Cashel—the archiepiscopal city of Cashel—nor at Tipperary, is there any circulating library, or book society. This is certainly a singular and unpleasant fact. Towns in England, containing as these do, from seven to ten thousand inhabitants, would certainly afford at least one public library, and more than one reading society. A library was attempted at Tipperary; but it was not supported, and either was lately, or now is, on sale.

I visited the chief public institutions of Clonmel; the most important of which, is the House of Industry. One thing struck me as an error. I saw a great number of persons, who were sent there by a magistrate, for no other reason than because they were females of bad character.—This, I cannot but regard as hurtful to the general morals, and indirectly tending to the corruption of female character; for the vacuum occasioned by forcibly withdrawing these individuals, is speedily filled. A large lunatic asylum is now in progress; and this, during the last two years, has been

another source of employment to the inhabitants of Clonmel.

Besides its principal commercial street, Clonmel has many other good streets, inhabited evidently by respectable individuals; and there are a considerable number of resident gentry in the neighbourhood, who keep up much friendly intercourse: and having mentioned this word, I am reminded by it, that I have not said any thing of the state of society, since leaving Dublin. With few exceptions, and unless for some particular object, I do not mention the names of individuals from whom I received attentions. But I have seen enough of society in Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Tipperary counties, to entitle me to speak of it.

I should say, that throughout the country, there is a great deal of intercourse, and a constant interchange of visits; and that every one, whose means are sufficient, and whose house is large enough, has resident company: and I must add, that a considerable difference is observable in the mode of life, among the same class of persons, in England and in Ireland. I think there is generally more display in Ireland, and a less apparent regard to

economy: though it must be recollected, that this display costs less in Ireland, than in England. Two or three servants are seen waiting at table in Ireland, in a house where in England, one would suffice: but then, wages are at least a third lower than they are in England; and it costs a much less sum to support servants in Ireland, because they are contented with a different description of food. Vehicles, too, are more common. Every body keeps a jaunting car; but then a jaunting car costs but 20*l.* or 25*l.* building, with all its et ceteras; and there is no tax on either carriage or horse; and in many counties, no toll-bars.

People entertain handsomely in Ireland; but in looking over the dinner table, one must recollect the difference between London and the Irish markets, in the price of provisions. A pair of fowls, that in London would cost 5*s.* or 6*s.*, may be bought in most parts I have yet visited, for 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* The turkey, that in London would cost 10*s.*, 12*s.*, or 15*s.*, is placed on the table in Ireland, for 2*s.* 6*d.*, or 3*s.*; and I have seen a roasting pig, which could not have been purchased in any part of England for 6*s.*, bought in Ireland for 1*s.* 6*d.*

The profusion of a dinner table, therefore, is not an expensive profusion.

In the article of drink, there is less apparent, as well as less real expense, than in England: in the best society, little wine is taken; and unless in the very highest society, whiskey punch is universally introduced. I have seen whiskey punch at the tables of country gentlemen, worth at least five or six thousand per annum; and where, in nothing else, any deviation could be found from the elegance which pervades the dinner table of men of equal fortune in England. Excellent claret, however, is always at the option of the stranger, if he prefer it.

Of Irish hospitality towards strangers, I need say nothing: that hospitality is not mere civility; it is kindness also. It must be borne in mind, that in the observations I make at present, I am not qualified to speak of other parts of Ireland, than of the counties of Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Tipperary. Of Connaught society, I shall be enabled to speak by and by.

The environs of Clonmel are extremely pretty. The slopes of the hills which form the right bank of the Suire, and which, opposite to Clonmel, are

of very considerable altitude, are cultivated almost to the summit; reminding me, in some places, of the slopes of the lower Pyrenees, in the neighbourhood of *Bagnères.* From an elevation called Fairy Hill, situated on the right bank of the river, about half a mile below Clonmel, a magnificent view over the valley of the Suire is laid open,—not surpassed, in richness and variety, by any of the celebrated vales of England or Wales.

Many delightful excursions may be made from Clonmel; particularly up the banks of the river, and through the domains of Mr. Bagwell, Lord Donoughmore, and Colonel Greene. Lord Donoughmore's is a very fine domain, abounding in magnificent specimens of ash, elm, and lime trees; and Kilmanahan Castle, the residence of Colonel Greene, is a fine structure, and beautifully situated. I am sorry I can say nothing in favour of these three landlords. Mr. Bagwell, to whom a great part of Clonmel belongs, does no good, and evinces little sympathy with the people: and the virtues of Colonel Greene, as a resident landlord, are far from being conspicuous. Mr. Bagwell is still young; and, it is to be hoped, may yet discover what are the true interests of a landlord.

Having spent some pleasant days at Clonmel, I left that town for Mitchelstown. The first nine miles of the road I was already acquainted with; for the road to Mitchelstown, travelled by Bianconi's cars, lies through Cahir. There is, indeed, another road, by Clogheen and Ballyporeen, famed in song; but the road being (as I was informed) uninteresting, and there being no public conveyance, I preferred taking advantage of Bianconi. Between Cahir and Mitchelstown, there is nothing very attractive; the country is not all under cultivation, nor susceptible of a high state of improvement. The Galtee hills lie all the way on the left, at no great distance from the road; and offer to the eye those pleasant resting-places, and those agreeable diversities of light and shadow, in which mountain views are prolific. I reached Mitchelstown early in the afternoon, and established myself in the Kingston Arms Hotel; where I remained for about ten days, writing up my notes, digesting my information, and occasionally enlarging my observations; I shall always recollect with pleasure, my sojourn at Mitchelstown.

CHAPTER VI.

Mitchelstown and its situation—Lord Kingston's Domain and Castle—Miserable condition of the People of Mitchelstown and Details—State of the surrounding Country—Rents—The Sessions at Mitchelstown—Lord Kingsbro's Mountain Lodge—Prices of Provisions—Mitchelstown Caves—Journey to Mallow—Donneraille—Mallow—State of the Poor of Mallow, and of the Neighbourhood—Farmers—Mallow as a Watering Place—Suburbs—Duty on Glass—English and Irish Ideas of Comfort—Difficulties in the way of Improvement—Schools—Markets—and rough Manners—The Vicinity of Mallow—Neighbouring Landlords—Bad feeling between the Aristocracy and the People—Return to Mitchelstown—Its excellent Hotel.

I like greatly the situation of Mitchelstown,—fine mountain boundaries form its horizon; and its neighbourhood offers an agreeable diversity of scenery, in the inequalities of its surface, and the abundance of wood: but above all, there is here the splendid domain of the Earl of Kingston, of which I shall afterwards have occasion to speak more in detail. There is one very singular feature

about Mitchelstown. It possesses, what I believe no other town of the same size, or of even much larger dimensions, can boast—a square; not the mere market place of a country town;—there is that besides; but a square surrounded by well built houses, and as large as some of the smaller of the London squares. One half of this square, consisting of about seventeen houses, is called the College; and is an endowment of the Kingston family, for the reception of reduced respectable families, who have a free house and 40*l.* per annum;—the house, too, being kept in repair. The gate into the Kingston domain, forms part of one side of the square, and the hotel is opposite to it.

Free admission into Lord Kingston's park, is a great advantage, possessed by all the inhabitants. The gardens even are open to all respectable persons. Lord Kingston's domain contains about twelve hundred English acres; and whether in forest paths, or grassy walks, or wide gravel roads, offers all that can be desired, either for the gay promenade or the solitary ramble. The house—Mitcheltown castle, is one of the most magnificent in Ireland: it is built in the castellated form; and

both from its extent and height, is a most imposing object from every part of the surrounding country, seen, as it generally is, towering above the surrounding woods. The interior is not unworthy of the external appearance of the edifice. It has a magnificent gallery, fine suites of apartments, and all besides, that comfort can add to splendour.

Mitchelstown and its neighbourhood have suffered grievously, by the late affliction which has fallen upon the Kingston family:—the deprivation of an expenditure of 40,000*l.* per annum, has been most seriously felt in the country; and the deterioration of Mitchelstown and its neighbourhood, has fast followed the misfortune to which I have alluded;—if I were to search Ireland throughout, I could not find a better illustration of the difference between residence and non-residence, than in the present situation of Mitchelstown.

The evils which have resulted from the misfortune of the Kingston family, affect the whole of the lower classes in the town and its vicinity:—when I was in Mitchelstown, the distress was so urgent, that in order to prevent the actual starvation of hundreds, a public meeting was held, and a

subscription entered into; and the scenes, which the investigation that followed, for the distribution of meal, &c., laid open, were of the most aggravated misery. Will it be believed, that in a town containing about five thousand inhabitants, *eighteen hundred persons* were found in a state of starvation? at least *twelve hundred* of these were unemployed labourers and their families; the remaining *six hundred* consisting of the aged, the infirm, widows, and their children. In one side of one street, five hundred and seventy persons were found requiring relief: and besides the eighteen hundred requiring relief in the town, nearly twelve hundred more were in a state of destitution, in the immediately surrounding country and within the parish. These are facts, and fearful facts they are; and well worthy the attention of those who are inimical to the institution of *any* system of poor laws, or of a labour rate; or who look coolly, upon any proposal for providing extensive employment. I should like to know how Dr. Chalmers' "*sympathies*" would have permanently provided for the six hundred aged and infirm. I do not approve of the argument of those who say, "at present the son supports the

infirm father—the brother, the aged sister; why disturb that arrangement which nature points out." Ireland is not a country in which additional burdens ought to be thrown upon the industrious poor. The willingness of an industrious son—a labourer at eight-pence a-day, to support his father,—is no reason why the rich, who are more able than he, ought not to give of their abundance.

The property around Mitchelstown is, upon the whole, in a good condition, as to the rents and the comforts of the landholders. A great part is held directly from Lord Kingston; and it may be fairly said, that there are no rack-rents. The average rent of land to the occupier, may be stated at about 25*s*. The mountain farms are let very low, as low as 5*s*. an acre: and it was no unusual thing with Lord Kingston, to remit altogether, the rent of a man who was active and of improving habits. Few thatched farm houses are to be seen. They are mostly stone slated houses, built in the English mode. Where I know that there are the means of comfort within, I like to see a neat exterior. Land is generally under a fair state of husbandry; though nowhere, in the condition of which it is susceptible.

Every where in Ireland, when the opportunity presented itself, I attended the sessions, and I did not neglect the opportunity in Mitchelstown. Here, I was pleased with the administration of justice,—as indeed I had generally been, elsewhere: it appeared to me to be patient, painstaking, and equitable. A stranger is exceedingly struck with the different complexion of the cases which come before an English and an Irish sessions. Among the twenty-six cases which were called, on the day on which I attended the sessions at Mitchelstown, there was not one case of theft. Five were cases of assault, generally arising out of the merest trifles; and some of these, assaults of the most aggravated character—so much so, that in England they would certainly have been transportation cases: here they were punished summarily, by fine, and imprisonment at hard labour. The rest of the cases were made up of summonses for wages. In these, I observed generally, a great spirit of litigation, and a good deal of quibbling: the sums claimed, were mostly for wages at eight-pence a day without diet: and one claim was for wages at so low a rate as five-pence.

This, however, was claimed by a youth. In the cases for assault, the weapons with which the assault was committed, were generally produced,—staves, that would have felled an ox; or stones that would have shivered a three-inch board. These latter are the most usual, and fatal weapons in the hands of an irritated, or malevolent Irishman. A stone is hurled at once, upon the least provocation; and it is with stones, that many of the most savage, and deliberate murders have been committed.

A visit to Lord Kingston's mountain lodge, where Lord Kingsboro' usually resides, forms an agreeable excursion from Mitchelstown. It lies about five miles from Mitchelstown, among the outposts of the Galtee mountains; and is certainly a delightful retreat. The "lodge" is built on a mount, which rises out of a hollow; and all above, below, and around, are thick fir woods, with a fine back-ground of dark mountains. A rapid stream too, circles round the height upon which the house stands.

I must not forget to mention the holy well, which is near Mitchelstown. The Catholic priest has greatly beautified the approach to this spot,

which is much resorted to by the devout, for devotional purposes. I have often seen them praying on the brink of the well, which is generally believed to work miraculous cures, and is dedicated to some saint whose name I forget—a saint, not so famous, I think, as some others.

Mitchelstown is a very cheap place of residence; and in proof of this, I annex the following list of prices.

Beef sells at from 3½*d.* to 4*d.* per lb. Mutton, at from 4*d.* to 5*d.* Lamb, in the season, about 3*d.* Veal is rarely to be had, and is not of a good quality. Pork, about 2½*d.*, but is sometimes as low as 1½*d.* per lb. Bacon pigs, average 20*s.* a cwt.

Fish is scarce. A good cod may be bought for 2*s.* 6*d.* A haddock, 6*d.* to 1*s.* The very best salmon may be bought at 5*d.* per lb., and trout at 1*s.* a dozen.

Rabbits are sold at 8*d.* a couple. Turkeys, 3*s.* a couple; geese, 1*s.* 10*d.* a pair; ducks, 1*s.* a pair; fowls, 10*d.* to 1*s.* a pair.

Bread of the first quality is 2*d.* per lb. Fresh butter, 9*d.* per lb. in summer; and 1*s.* or 1*s.* 1*d.*

in winter. Milk is sold at 3½*d.* for four pints, all the year round. Vegetables are not supplied in great variety, or plenty, except potatos, which average about 2¾*d.* per stone.

Coals are 26*s.* a ton; turf, 1*s.* 8*d.* a horse load.

A mason will receive for his labour 2s. a day; a carpenter, 2*s.* 6*d.*; a slater, 2*s.*; but they cannot get constant employment.

The rent of a good house, containing two sitting rooms, three bed rooms, good attics, a commodious basement story, with garden, coach house, and stables, rents at about 20*l.* per annum. Smaller, but respectable houses, may be had for 10*l.*

Some of my readers may have heard of the recently discovered Mitchelstown, or as they are sometimes called, Kingston, caves,—having been discovered on the property of the earl. Indisposition prevented me from visiting these caves; and having allotted the last day of my sojourn at Mitchelstown for this visit, it was impossible for me afterwards to make up for the omission; because to have delayed my departure, would have forced me to break engagements in other parts of the country; and in particular, one,—to meet the crown solicitor

of Munster, at the Clare and Limerick assizes, which I was anxious to attend. I confess, however, that my disappointment was not great: caves, though in Ireland, are nothing *Irish:* and I had reason to know, that there had been considerable exaggeration, on the subject of the caves. I have no great curiosity about these things myself, having seen caves and mines in abundance; and having been always disappointed; and I knew also, that my scientific knowledge would not have enabled me to speak learnedly of stalactites, and stalagmites. Such were my grounds of consolation. I annex, however, a few particulars, gathered from the best sources.

The caves are situated about midway between Cahir, in the county of Tipperary, and Mitchelstown, in the county of Cork, but are rather the nearest to Mitchelstown; and as the inn at Mitchelstown, is of superior excellence, that is the best point to visit them from. The entrance is scarcely wider than sufficient to allow one to get in; but it has been lately somewhat improved. After entering, you partly walk, and partly slide down an inclined plain, about fifty feet in length; and

arriving then, at the edge of a precipice, you descend a ladder, and reach, about twenty feet below, another inclined plain, with a very rugged bottom. This leads to one of the halls, not very large, and about thirty feet high; and from thence, the visitor creeps on all fours into another hall, where there is much to attract and please. Here are four crystallized pillars, reaching from the floor to the ceiling; one of them, nearly twenty feet in circumference at the base, and forming an irregular cone. Besides this hall, there is what is called the gothic gallery, which is about twelve feet wide; and the garret cave, about thirty feet square: the great attraction of all these, being the brilliant spar, in many places covering the bottom; the stalactites depending from the roof; and above all, the festooning and drapery of beautiful crystallization, which hang from the projecting rocks, in singularly graceful folds. More minute description of a cave than this, appears unnecessary. After rainy weather, the bottom is wet; but is passable enough at all times. A good deal of scrambling is requisite, and some creeping; but these only give a zest to an expedition of this kind: and there can

be no doubt that the caves, although the subject of ridiculous exaggeration, are worth a visit by any one; and must be extremely interesting to those, who are learned in spars and stalactites.

Mallow, which lies about eighteen miles from Mitchelstown, and not very far from the centre of the county of Cork, I visited before proceeding farther south. In going to Mallow, I passed through Kildorrery, and Donneraille. The former of these scarcely requires a passing word. The latter is more interesting; both because it is much larger, and because it is surrounded by the beautiful scenery of Lord Donneraille's domain, which contains about seven hundred acres, and abounds in fine timber. The town is poor enough. Lord Donneraille gives little encouragement to anything calculated to improve the place; and evinces but a very moderate sympathy with the condition of the people. His lordship's agent is well-disposed; but his good dispositions receive small encouragement from his superior.

After leaving Donneraille, the road to Mallow is uninteresting. The country is scantily wooded;

and a great proportion of it appeared to me, to be under very indifferent cultivation. There is a constant gradual descent of between two and three miles to Mallow, which lies in a hollow of the hills; but with a richly wooded and beautiful country immediately around it, and extending up and down the Blackwater river, which runs by the town.

Mallow has long had the character of being a highly respectable town; inhabited by many respectable persons; with a numerous resident gentry around it; enjoying a thriving retail trade; and a great resort of invalids, for the benefits of its waters. Some of these advantages it yet retains; in others, it has declined. Mallow still enjoys a good trade, partly arising from the well-peopled resident neighbourhood; and partly by the demand of the country dealers; for there are several capitalists, trades-people in Mallow, who lay in their stocks in London, and who supply the dealers as advantageously as if they went to Cork or Dublin. I found no complaint, therefore, of the retail trade of Mallow, except that which arose from the dull season of the year, and the low means

of the agriculturists. Indeed, I should say of the chief street in Mallow, that it had as thriving a look as any English country town.

But these general indications of prosperity, and the really favourable condition of the retail trade, I found to be no index to the condition of the labouring classes. I have every reason to believe I do not speak much wide of the truth, when I assert, that seventy-five per cent. of the working classes of Mallow, are not in constant employment; and the remuneration for labour is at the lowest ebb, more than eight-pence per day, without diet, being scarcely ever given. I walked through the establishment of an extensive pawnbroker, and received from my visit, no very favourable impression of the condition of even those classes above that of the labouring poor. I saw numerous articles, the property of small farmers,—articles worth from 10*s.* to 30*s.*, and generally pledged, as I was informed, for payment of county rates. I was also told, that at the time when tithes were sued for, the business of the establishment was extremely flourishing, owing to the property put in pawn by the farmers.

As a resort for invalids, Mallow has greatly

declined. Some years ago, it was visited during the season, by not fewer than a hundred families on an average; and there are not now one-sixth part of that number of visitors. Various reasons are assigned for this. It may be partly owing to the caprice of fashion, which has of late years been setting in, in favour of Cove; but it is more the result of the increased steam intercourse with England, which permits Irish invalids to take advantage of the waters of Cheltenham, Clifton, and other places of resort across the Channel; which, whether better than Mallow or not, have the superior attraction with which every distant place is invested. The waters of Mallow are recommended in cases of consumption, not perhaps so much with the hope of cure, as with the view of alleviating symptoms. The climate too, is mild; the town is entirely screened from cold blasts; and there is a great variety of beautiful and enticing drives. The Spa house is pretty and convenient.

The inhabitants of Mallow are not without their sources of indoor recreation. They have a commodious club house, with a reading room, and tolerable library; and there is a public circulating

library in the town, kept by a respectable bookseller.

Mallow, like all Irish towns, has its bad lanes, and its indifferent suburbs; but I have seen worse cabins in most other towns. Few or none were without bedsteads, and some furniture, and glass windows—diminutive indeed—but windows nevertheless. I will not omit this opportunity of observing, that the repeal of the duty on glass would very materially tend to better the habitations of the Irish peasantry. The cabin with a bit of a glass window, has quite a superior air, in comparison with its unenlightened neighbours. It must be admitted, however, in throwing out any suggestion for improvement of this kind, that the character of the Irish peasant presents some obstacles; and that the progress of improvement in food, habitation, and clothing, will not be a rapid one: education only, can check the tendences, which naturally stand in the way of improvement. There is little or nothing at present, of that feeling among the Irish peasantry, which spreads comfort and neatness, about and within the cottage of an English labourer; which

white-washes, or sands his floor; polishes his table; brightens his utensils; twines honeysuckle and roses round his porch; and covers his table with the materials of a comfortable meal. The Irish peasant is too easily satisfied. The English peasant will work, not only that he may live, but that he may live well and comfortably. The Irish peasant, on the contrary, will generally work only up to the acquirement of mere subsistence: he would rather be idle, than work for what he calls "kitchen:" (i. e.) all beyond the necessaries of life. But first of all, let us enable the Irish peasant to live, even without "kitchen." These superior tastes will follow.

Of the population of Mallow, there are about seven Catholics to one Protestant; and the Protestants are greatly divided: the most numerous body of dissenters from the establishment, being the Wesleyan Methodists. I visited one of the schools in their connexion, and found it well attended. There were two or three Catholic children present; and I may take this opportunity of saying, that I have found frequent examples of Catholic parents sending their children to Pro-

testant schools, because they thought their children received a better education in them than in their own; and from my own observation, I think they are right.

In a visit which I made to the market at Mallow, I was considerably struck by the very uncivilized demeanour of the venders. I was accompanied by a highly respectable inhabitant of the town: and not contented with setting forth the excellence of their legs, loins, shoulders, &c., of the beef, mutton, and lamb exposed, they beset my companion like so many savages; and followed him out of the market, half the length of a street; one thrusting a quarter of lamb, the other a saddle of mutton, in his face.

I made an excursion through the beautiful country which surrounds Mallow, visiting, in leaving the town, the pretty residence of Mr. Jephson; and the fine old castle, now ruined and ivy grown, beautifully situated at the entrance of the pleasure grounds. I had ample evidence in my drives round Mallow, of the extensive resident neighbourhood. Handsome or pretty villas were every where seen, and all inhabited by the proprietors of them; but

notwithstanding this advantage, I found a fearful lack of employment for the labourer. In one parish, where I made minute inquiries, I ascertained that almost any number of labourers could have been hired for constant labour, at sixpence per day—working, out of that miserable allowance, the rent of a cabin,—perhaps eighty days labour.

The large properties in this part of Cork, are under very different management. Lord Arden, who owns a fine estate in this neighbourhood, is a noble minded man,—perfectly liberal, if not perfectly judicious; and studying in every way, the comfort of his tenantry. His lordship gives no leases—a practice of which I have already spoken, as not altogether unsuitable to the present condition of Ireland, but which the growth of capital would necessarily put an end to.

A very different landlord from Lord Arden, is Lord Limerick. *He* draws the uttermost farthing.

I was sorry to learn, that a bad feeling existed in this neighbourhood, between the gentry and the lower classes. This originated in arrears of rent being demanded from those who had promised votes; but who, when the time arrived, voted as they

said, "for their clergy and their country." Some of these individuals were committed to prison;—the amount of rent due, was collected at the Catholic chapel door; and the priest, heading a crowd of people, released the individuals from confinement; and in returning through the streets, took the opportunity of haranguing the people, on the tyranny of the upper classes. God forbid that I should quarrel with any man for voting in such a manner, as he conceives likely to serve his country; or that I should defend any acts of revenge, in punishment of supposed political offences. But neither can I excuse the conduct of a minister of religion and peace, irritating the passions of the lower classes, and endeavouring to widen the breach, which unhappily now subsists, between the aristocracy and the people.

From Mallow I returned to Mitchelstown, which I now prepared to leave, for Fermoy, Lismore, Youghall, and Cork.

At Michelstown, one of the schools under the new educated board, is in operation; but I shall abstain from making any observations upon these schools, until I have had more extensive opportunities of judging of them.

Let me not leave Mitchelstown, without doing justice to the excellence of the hotel,—which, I really think, has not a fault. Excepting in some parts of Scotland, I have never eaten such breakfasts as at Mitchelstown. As for dinners, no one could desire better. I shall not soon forget Mrs. Sing's dressed lamb's heads, or rhubarb pies;—wine and whiskey are alike worthy of the dinner that precedes them; and, in civility, accommodation, and moderate charges, Mitchelstown Hotel must satisfy every one.

CHAPTER VII.

Journey to Lismore—Fermoy—The Blackwater River—Lismore—Picturesque Views—Condition of the Town, and neighbouring Landholders—The Duke of Devonshire—Other Landlords—Ejectments—Visit to the Trappist Settlement at Cappoquin—Details—Environs of Lismore—The Castle—Descent of the Blackwater to Youghall—The Town of Youghall—Its situation—Antiquities and Inhabitants—Means of Improvement—Trade—The Church—Sir Walter Raleigh's House—Emigration—Journey to Cork—Situation, Streets, and Population of Cork—Suburbs—Traits of Character—Public Institutions—Present state of Cork as a Commercial City.

I now left Mitchelstown, for the military town of Fermoy. The only interesting object on the road from Mitchelstown to Fermoy, is Kilworth, the village and seat of Lord Mountcashel, whose village did not exhibit signs of much prosperity; but I merely speak of it, as I saw it *en passant;* and besides, I passed through it at that very early hour (5 A. M.) when things do not look to great advantage. At Kilworth, there is an extensive corn

mill, which gives employment to a considerable number of persons.

Fermoy, which is only eight Irish miles distant from Mitchelstown, is seen several miles before one reaches it. This is partly owing to the extensive barracks, which, at a distance, would lead one to imagine the town much larger than it is. Fermoy, however, is not a very small town, and is a remarkably pretty and prettily situated place. It lies on the right bank of the river Blackwater; and from its extending in line along the river, *a la militaire*, and having a hollow square in the centre of the line in front of the bridge—covered too, both in flank and rear, by fine, cultivated, wooded slopes —it presents a more imposing appearance than most other towns of the same size. The barracks are magnificent. They stand opposite to the town, on the left bank of the river,—the old on one side, and the new on the other side of the road, which runs from the centre of the town at right angles to it.

I need scarcely say, that Fermoy depends for its support, mainly upon its garrison, which sometimes contains several regiments; and is at all times, one of the largest military stations in Ireland. But

notwithstanding the patronage of the military, and consequent good retail trade which Fermoy certainly has, I found that it had its proportion of unemployed persons; and rather more, I thought, than its due proportion of beggars. There is a considerable number of resident gentry about Fermoy; the town has, what is called, a genteel neighbourhood; and by commercial men, it is designated, a good little town.

The banks of the Blackwater, between Fermoy and Lismore, present many attractions; though the more celebrated scenery on the Blackwater is to be found lower down. A finely cultivated country lies all the way on the right; and the opposite bank of the river is adorned by many fine seats, generally embosomed in wood. Mount Cashel appears to great advantage, soon after leaving Fermoy; and the seat of Mr. Grant, some miles farther, is very beautifully situated. I noticed on the road to day, a trait of manners which I had not before observed:—two peasants, who appeared to recognize each other after a long separation, and who chanced to meet on the road, embraced each other, *a la Francais.* This, by-the-by, is an

execrable road—the first very bad road I had yet seen in Ireland.

Lismore possessed a two-fold interest. I had everywhere heard much of its surrounding beauties; and I had, ever since setting foot in Ireland, heard the very highest praises of the state of the Duke of Devonshire's property, of which, Lismore was the first portion that had come in my way. My expectations were therefore considerably raised; and I am happy to be able to say, that they were not disappointed. As for the natural beauties of Lismore, they are scarcely to be surpassed. The Blackwater, both above and below the bridge which leads into the town, flows through one of the most verdant of valleys, just wide enough to shew its greenness and fertility; and diversified by noble single trees, and fine groups. The banks bounding this valley, are in some places thickly covered, in other places, lightly shaded with wood. Then, there is the bridge itself, and the castle—grey and massive, with its ruined and ivy-grown towers; and the beautiful tapering spire of the church; and the deep wooded lateral dells, that carry to the Blackwater, its tributary streams. Nothing, I say, can

surpass, in richness and beauty, the view from the bridge, when at evening, the deep woods, and the grey castle, and the still river, are left in shade; while the sun, streaming up the valley, gilds all the softer slopes and swells that lie opposite.

To say that there are no unemployed poor, and no beggars, or paupers in Lismore, would be, to assert an untruth; but I feel myself bound to say, that of the former class, there are comparatively few; and that a large proportion of the pauperism of Lismore, does not naturally belong to it; but has resulted from the *clearances* of some neighbouring, and less considerate landlords; and I am also fully warranted in saying, that I found much truth, though perhaps a little exaggeration, in the accounts I had every where heard of the Duke of Devonshire's property.

The foundation upon which the reputation, as a good landlord, of this great proprietor rests, is, that his land is let lower than the land of most other proprietors; that, in fact, a farmer can live out of his land: and this, in Ireland, is saying much. I do not think the average rent of good land, at a moderate distance from the town, exceeds 20*s.*;

and many of the very small occupiers were certainly in a much more comfortable condition than I had seen them elsewhere. I found, for example, in the course of a walk, one man, who had three acres and a half at 7*s.* an acre. This land was originally in a nearly uncultivated state, and was let for twenty years, at that rent. I found another, paying 3*l.* for two acres of good land close to the town, with a very comfortable house attached, which elsewhere would have let at 3*l.* or 4*l.* without any land. It is also agreeable to have it in my power to say, that no one had an ill word to say of those in the management of the property. In many other minor matters, the tenants of the Duke of Devonshire, at Lismore, have advantages,—the chief of which perhaps is, the privilege of cutting turf, as much as they please, at one penny per horse load. I would remit the penny: it can be no object to the Duke; and cases may occur, in which a penny may be an object to a poor person. Ejectments too, with their attendant cruelties, are unknown on this property; if tenants must be got rid of, something is done for them. I am sorry I cannot say so much for many other landlords. "I

am deucedly fatigued this morning," said an attorney, upon whom a lady called one Monday morning; "yesterday we had some tough work—thirty-eight ejectments to put into effect, and a world of trouble they cost us; egad, so tenacious were some of the people, that we had to pull down the roofs about their ears." This is heartless work.

Were it not for the employment afforded on the Duke of Devonshire's property, and for the other advantages enjoyed by those who live under his Grace, Lismore would be a very poor place. It contains no manufacture of any kind; and although the gentry of the neighbourhood are many of them resident, the retail trade of the town derives little advantage from them. Fermoy and Youghall lie too near; and there are besides, the little towns of Cappoquin, and Tallow, each within a few miles of Lismore, and each, of course, in some degree patronized by those who live near to it. I saw no cabins of the very worst description, in the outskirts of Lismore; nor many even nearly approaching to the worst: but I found, among the aged and infirm, a great deal of that poverty and destitution, which can never be prevented or removed by the

exertions of individuals, however high their public character, or however eminent their private virtues.

I devoted a day to a visit to the establishment of the Trappists, situated about six miles from Lismore. The road lies through the little town of Cappoquin; and as far as that place, runs along the left bank of the Blackwater, and discloses, at every bend, new and striking beauties. Cappoquin, prettily situated, just at the turn of the river, is rather a clean little village, consisting of one street, which, at the upper end, degenerates into a suburb of cabins. Beyond this, the road climbs up the side of a deep wooded dell; and gradually rises, until it leaves cultivation behind, and enters upon the moor and bog land, which stretches over all the neighbouring mountains; and upon this upland slope, is situated the Trappist establishment, which has a singular effect seen at a distance,—apart from all other buildings,—itself of immense magnitude, and seemingly placed in the midst of a desert.

It is not yet two years, since the Trappists settled in this neighbourhood; and (thanks to the superstitions of the country people) the progress they have made in building the convent, as well as

in reclaiming the land, is indeed miraculous. Sir Richard Keane, a large landowner in this neighbourhood, granted them, rent free, on a lease of a hundred years, five hundred and seventy odd acres of moor and bog land; and Sir Richard is likely to be amply repaid for his liberality, in the proof which has been afforded of the capabilities of the land. The very first year, a fine crop of potatos was raised. At present, upwards of sixty acres are under tillage; and on some of these acres, I saw as luxuriant crops of oats as I had seen in any other part of the country. In the extensive garden, too, which the Trappists have formed, I observed as fine beans, pease, and other vegetables, as could possibly be raised on any soil. All this has been accomplished by the agency of lime kilns. The land is boggy on the surface; but below, there is as fine and deep a soil, as any farmer could desire. It is true, that there has been a great supply of human labour; and of all its accessories. The brethren themselves are between forty and fifty strong; and in such veneration are these holy men held, that an incredible amount of labour has been contributed gratis. I myself saw eighteen horses

and carts, and upwards of twenty men at work, drawing lime, all of them sent by the farmers as an act of piety. Some kinds of labour, however, are paid for. The masons, and others employed in building, are paid ordinary wages,—for the munificence of some great men (among others, the Duke of Devonshire, who, singularly enough, gave 100*l.*) and the contributions of the good Catholics, leave the Trappists in want of nothing. The building, which has only been begun ten months, already vies in size with any moderate sized cathedral, and might hold within it a dozen of the Irish Protestant churches.

The spectacle here offered to the traveller and inquirer, is at the same time pleasing and melancholy. It is pleasing, as affording direct proof of the facility with which a great part of the waste lands of Ireland may be cultivated, by the instrumentality of two things, in which Ireland most abounds,—lime, and human labour; and it affords, too, a melancholy proof of the misdirection of human energies, and the prevalence of superstition.

The Trappists are almost all of them young men. At present, they do not strictly conform to

the rules of their order; but the moment their convent is completed, and the necessity for communicating with their fellow men ceases, they purpose taking upon themselves all the austerities of the order—silence, as the most indispensable and distinguishing. The brethren are almost all of them Irish; the few exceptions being English.

I had some conversation in returning, with one of the men who was leading limestone. He was a small landholder, and did not at all grudge his labour; and in place of agreeing with me, that he was a fool to throw away his own and his horse's labour, he said he should be a much greater fool if he did not. If to the munificence of Protestant landlords, there continues to be united the religious zeal of Catholic farmers and labourers, these five hundred and seventy acres of Sir Richard Keane's, will be, ere long, a fine productive estate; and the source of a pretty independency to the brothers of La Trappe.

Besides the Trappist settlement, there are several objects of curiosity at no great distance from Lismore. Amongst these, I may particularly mention Drumanna, the seat of Mr. Villiers Stuart;

and Glencairn, the residence of Mrs. Bush. The latter of these, is higher up the river than Lismore; the former stands on the river side, between Cappoquin and Youghall. But drive or walk in whatever direction you may from Lismore, you are sure of being surrounded by beauty.

There is in Lismore, a school under the new education board, at which between two and three hundred Catholic children attend. Here, as elsewhere, the school is entirely in the hands of the Catholics,—the Protestant clergyman having declined any connexion with it. There is also a Protestant parochial school here, at which about twenty-five children receive instruction. The number of Protestants in Lismore, is under three hundred. There are ninety communicants on feast days. The cathedral church of Lismore is pretty and small; but room is, nevertheless found in it, for the stalls of the non-resident prebends and other dignitaries. The office of the dean, who died lately, has not been filled up.

Lismore Castle, which I have mentioned as a striking and picturesque object seen from the bridge, is worth a visit, not so much on account of

any thing in the interior, as for the view from its summit. The castle was gutted, and rebuilt in the interior, about twenty years ago; and, at present, the outer walls only remain in their original state. The pleasure-grounds are beautifully laid out; and are remarkable for a double row of very ancient yews,—which form a most funereal walk,—and for a magnificent clump of ash trees, which over-top the castle on one side. In the gardens are seen all the choice shrubs and flowers usually found in this part of Ireland,—particularly an arbutus, as large as a forest tree.

We have had "descents" of the Danube, and descents of the Rhine and of the Rhone, and of many other rivers; but we have not in print, as far as I know, any descent of the Blackwater; and yet, with all these descents of foreign rivers in my recollection, I think the descent of the Blackwater not surpassed by any of them. A detail of all that is seen in gliding down the Blackwater, from Cappoquin to Youghall, would fill a long chapter: there is every combination that can be produced by the elements that enter into the picturesque and the beautiful;—deep shades—bold rocks—verdant

slopes—with the triumphs of art superadded, and made visible in magnificent houses, and beautiful villas, with their decorated lawns and pleasure-grounds. There is Tourin, the seat of Sir R Musgrave, a fine old place; Drumanna, the magnificent domain of Mr. Villiers Stuart,—embossed in a world of foliage. There is Campire, and Strancally, and the fine place of Mr. Ronan, and Ballinatray, and others,—all diversifying these banks, in the short course of the river from Cappoquin to Youghall. I left Cappoquin soon after mid-day, and reached Youghall about four o'clock.

I was greatly pleased with the first distant view of Youghall, across the bay, situated under a jutting, wooded hill; and appearing to stand partly in the water; with the gap beyond, through which the broad Atlantic is seen. One might be greatly deceived in the size of Youghall, by merely driving through it. Besides the chief street, which is extremely long, there are many other good streets, both towards the water, and towards the hill; and innumerable lanes also, containing a very dense population. The great number of persons perambulating the principal street in the evening, is

indeed particularly striking, and is sufficiently indicative of the size of the town.

But the inhabitants of Youghall have a more healthful, and a more inviting promenade, than the street. I scarcely know any where a finer promenade than the Cork road, just on leaving the town, with the sea directly below the parapet; and commanding views of the strikingly beautiful entrance to the bay, and of the wide ocean beyond.

Youghall has all the appearance of being, what it is, an old town. The houses, however good, have an old look about them. There are exceptions, of course; for every town, however old, has its modern quarters; but the general character of the town, is antiquity. In the chief street, we see an old grey tower—one of the ancient defences of the town. Mounting towards the hill, one stumbles upon massive fragments of the old wall; and here and there, houses are seen in a ruined state, betokening, I fear, not antiquity only, but decay also. From many points, one catches a fine view over the bay, the town, and the surrounding country; amongst others, from the pleasure-grounds attached to a building, called "The College;"—why so called, I

could not learn; and also, from a garden contiguous to it. The "College," although the property of the Duke of Devonshire, is in a sadly neglected condition; but I believe his Grace's title is disputed, which partly accounts for this.

The suburbs of Youghall are large, and bad: they extend in every direction up the hill, behind the old town wall, and contain many very miserable cabins. I found the rent of those, of a somewhat better description, generally 2*l.*; which, with wages at eight-pence per day, the usual rate here for constant employment, would require sixty days' labour; and, in all cases where the tenant is in the landlord's employment, it is the invariable practice to take out the rent in labour. In a town so large as this, there must be very considerable want of employment, and a large quantum of destitution,—the result of age and infirmity. Here too, as in every sea-port, there is a class of fishermen, whose precarious calling frequently places them within the reach of pauperism. At the same time there are worse towns, in these respects, than Youghall.

Youghall is susceptible of very great improvement in many ways. Nothing would more cer-

tainly confer a benefit on Youghall, than the establishment of a steamer to Bristol. It is true that Youghall is situated between Waterford and Cork, from both of which places there are steamers. But Youghall possesses advantages, which do not belong to either Cork or Waterford. There is no river to descend; the vessel is not obliged, as at Cork, to sail only at the top of the tide, nor, in the return voyage, to wait for the flow. Five minutes after a vessel weighs anchor, at Youghall, she is at sea; and there is little reason to doubt that a steamer from Youghall, in place of from Cork, would save a tide to Bristol. In another respect, a steamer, to and from Bristol, would benefit Youghall. It would create an important trade. At present, the dealers in groceries, &c. are supplied from Cork: they would then lay in their stocks direct from Bristol; and would, in their turn, supply the country dealers.

The improvement of Youghall, as a sea-bathing place, would be another means of increasing its prosperity. I never saw a spot offering greater facilities for this. The sea-beach is beautiful and extensive; fine sites for houses are abundant; the

surrounding country is agreeable; and the climate mild. There is not capital enough, or at all events, not enterprise in Youghall, to set on foot, or carry on with spirit, an improvement of this kind: but it would certainly, in the end, repay the great proprietor of Youghall, any outlay of capital that might be necessary. The Duke of Devonshire does nothing for the improvement of Youghall: it is not, like Lismore, his pet town; and the immediate return for capital, laid out in improvement, is not perhaps so obvious as to tempt the experiment. But it ought not to be expected that each outlay should produce its own return; it is in the general improvement of the town, and the consequent improvement of property, that the return ought to be looked for.

Several objects, in and about Youghall, are deserving of the traveller's notice. The church, and its neighbouring ruins, are among the chief objects of curiosity. The church is large, and massive; and one window, which remains of the contiguous ruin, is extremely beautiful, and quite entire. The church-yard, too, is one of the largest and finest, in point of situation, I have ever seen. It is inter-

spersed with lime and other trees; and, like every thing else about Youghall, has many remnants of antiquity,—old tombs, old ivied walls, moss-grown stones, and luxuriant weeds.

Nor must I omit to mention the residence of Sir Walter Raleigh, now called Myrtle Grove, one of the few buildings of its time, now habitable. This ancient building appears now, nearly as it appeared in its remote day; the style of the windows only has been changed; and the present possessor, Colonel Fount, evinces a proper respect for the antiquities by which he is surrounded. The interior of the house is oak wainscoting; and, in the drawing-room, the chimney-piece exhibits one of the finest specimens of carving I have ever seen. In making some repairs on this house, one of the oldest printed Bibles extant was found built up in the wall. It bears a date, only thirty-four years after the invention of printing. The environs of this old house are beautiful, and are remarkable for the exuberant growth of evergreens—myrtles and verbena especially, both of which here attain an extraordinary perfection.

I have already slightly adverted to the com-

mercial state of Youghall. I subjoin a few more minute details.

The only import trade of Youghall, is in timber, culm and coal. During last year, nine ships, having a burden of 1710 tons, arrived at Youghall, with 1935 tons of timber, from the British settlements in North America: and this branch of trade is thought to be on the increase. During the same period, 440 coasting vessels, with a burden of 37,400 tons, brought into Youghall 20,605 tons of culm, and 27,680 tons of coal. These branches of trade are nearly stationary.

The export trade of Youghall is considerable, and is thought to be rather on the increase, especially in the export of cattle. The corn trade varies, of course, with the produce of each harvest.

There were exported during the last year 107,090 quarters of oats; 23,288 quarters of wheat; 4921 quarters of barley; 9988 sacks of flour, 2½ cwt. to each sack; 1013 cows; 5220 pigs; 880 sheep; 2718 bales of bacon; 9950 firkins, and 136 kegs of butter:—the firkin contains 90 lb., the keg 60 lb. All of these exports are for the home markets.

There are thirty-seven vessels belonging to

Youghall, varying in burden from 30 to 315 tons; beside fishing hookers.

A strong disposition to emigrate has been of late manifested in Youghall, and its neighbourhood; and, in fact, it may be said of this part of Ireland, as of many others, that emigration is limited only by the lack of means among the lower classes. From the beginning of the year 1834, to the 15th June, 568 emigrants had left the port of Youghall; a greater number than had emigrated in any preceding year. They were chiefly agriculturists, and not of the lowest class. I noticed in one of the poorest cabins, in the neighbourhood of Youghall, where scarcely any furniture was to be seen, one of the printed bills, announcing the approaching departure of a ship for Canada, stuck upon the wall. This is a very little circumstance, but it is full of meaning.

I left Youghall, for Cork, by the mail, at an early hour, and proceeded through rather an uninteresting country—much of it under imperfect cultivation—to Castle Martyr; a very pretty clean village, and every way creditable to Lord Shannon, of whom I was happy to hear the best accounts.

From Castle Martyr to Middleton, I observed little that calls for record; but, from Middleton to Cork, nothing can surpass the beauty of the country that lies on both sides of the river Lee, which, at full tide, forms here the first of those magnificent inlets that reach from Cork to Cove. I shall not at present enlarge upon this charming scene, because I shall afterwards, in descending the river to Cove, have an opportunity of seeing it to greater advantage, and of doing what justice to it I am able. I reached Cork about nine o'clock, and found accommodation in that most excellent and splendid establishment "The Imperial."

Cork, I call a very fine city, surpassed by few in the excellence and width of its streets, or in the magnificence of its outlets; and deficient only in the architectural beauty of its public buildings. Although there is not in Cork so great a contrast between splendour and misery as in Dublin, more of this contrast is visible than English cities of the same size exhibit. The best quarters of Cork are fully upon a par with the best quarters of Liverpool or Manchester; but the worst parts of Cork are worse, and more extended than in these towns.

The best streets in Cork are the mercantile streets; and in these the shops are little, if at all, inferior to those of Dublin: few streets in Cork have the appearance of being inhabited by the upper classes. One cause of this is, that so large a number of the merchants live out of town. The passion for country houses in Cork is universal; and the extreme beauty of the environs is a great encourager of this passion.

Cork is a picturesque city—in its architecture; in its form; in its situation. With scarcely an exception, the streets are irregular; every house having a style, height, and size of its own: in its outline the city is picturesque, for, although the principal part of it is tolerably compact, it branches out at various points, following the course of the river and its tributaries: and it is eminently picturesque in situation, built, as it is, upon a most irregular surface, and dominated by the wooded heights that form the magnificent boundaries of the river and its sea-reaches. The best view of Cork is obtained from the elevation which rises to the north, at no great distance from the barracks; but from every elevation, on every side, the city is seen

to advantage. It is greatly deficient in spires, however. In any continental city, of the same size, one could certainly enumerate from twenty to thirty: Cork boasts of but two.

The extreme suburbs of Cork, are not so wretched as I found them in most other large towns: but if one does not find the long rows of mud cabins which branch out from Waterford or Kilkenny, abundance of wretched hovels are found in the lanes and yards of the city. In a city containing 107,000 inhabitants; and in which, there is no refuge for indigence, excepting that which is supplied by voluntary charity, there must be a fearful mass of helpless pauperism.

I should say of the street population of Cork, that it has a look of respectability. The upper and middling classes have a business air; and although one is frequently solicited by the mendicant, there appeared to me to be fewer rags, and fewer bare-feet; and, in short, a less amount of destitution, relatively to the population, than in Dublin; or, than in any other town I had yet seen in Ireland, excepting Clonmel. But especially, one does not observe in Cork, as in Waterford or Kilkenny,

those groups of able-bodied labourers, who find no market for the only commodity they possess. The price of labour in Cork, sufficiently proves the greater demand for it. In Youghall, only twenty-eight miles distant, eight-pence is the usual rate; in Cork, the double of that sum,—1*s.* 4*d.* may be stated as the common rate.

I was sorry to find in Cork, as in Dublin, the disposition towards improvidence; and display, amongst the upper and middle classes, strongly manifest. The passion for country houses, I have already spoken of: but there are other passions that trench upon both industry and economy—particularly the passion for horses and hunting, which, indeed, is not confined to Cork, but is observable in every part of Ireland where I have yet been. Six packs of hounds are kept in the neighbourhood of Cork; and everybody hunts, who can possibly contrive to keep a horse: nor is the indulgence of this passion looked upon as at all inconsistent with business. The young merchant may, without any imputation on his business habits, mount his hunter at the door of his counting-house. This is very different from our English commercial habits.

And, to descend a step lower, it is no inconsiderable proof of the love of pleasure amongst the citizens of Cork, that in a town of its size, there are nearly four hundred public *jingles*, as they call them in Cork; or cars, as they call them elsewhere.

The Sunday citizen population is *mighty* gay; and amongst the very lowest classes on Sunday, I saw very few rags. I strolled as far as the bishop's chapel—one of the largest and handsomest of the Catholic chapels—and had there an opportunity of seeing a vast congregation of the lower classes. Besides the multitude which crowded the church inside, there were from six to eight hundred persons kneeling and prostrate, in the inclosure around the church; all of them, apparently, engrossed with their devotions, and many, literally counting their beads.

The public institutions of Cork, are upon a great scale, and generally are conducted on the most approved plan. Amongst these, the most remarkable, perhaps, is the county gaol. This fine structure is situated about three quarters of a mile from the town, precisely opposite to the city gaol, which stands on the other side of the river. The Cork county gaol

is one of the best specimens I have seen. In all that concerns that internal regulation which depends upon the acting governor, it is perfect; and the perfection of its prison system, is only limited by the imperfections of the law. In one respect, I found much to admire in the system adopted by the acting governor; I allude to classification. This assiduous officer has discovered, long ago, that classification by offences is absurd; inasmuch as it is not the worst man, who, on all occasions, commits the greatest crime; but that the only rational system of classification, is that which classifies by conduct; and upon this principle, I found the governor acting. The labour of the prisoners in the Cork gaol, in part supplies its consumption; and up to the full amount of consumption, there is no good reason why gaol labour may not be made available; beyond this consumption, it would not be advisable to employ gaol labour, in a country circumstanced as Ireland is.

The Cork Institution, as it is called, is familiar to us, from the parliamentary grants which were at one time made to it, and from the withdrawal of these grants. It contains a good deal that is interesting:—a scientific library, of considerable

extent; a museum, including most departments of science; and a fine collection of casts from the antique, which are very properly made available to the advancement of the fine arts, by serving as models for instruction in drawing.

There are many other institutions of a public nature in Cork, deserving of notice: but minute details respecting these, would be inconsistent with my plan. But it is as a trading city, that Cork is chiefly interesting. Since the termination of the war, and especially since the introduction of steam-navigation, the trade of Cork has entirely changed its character. At the expiration of the war, it instantly lost the important commercial advantages which arose from the fulfilment of government contracts; but still retained possession of an extensive general trade: and although it may be said now, that the general merchant is almost extinct,—the trade itself is perhaps not diminished, but is only more diffused. This has been owing chiefly to the introduction of steam-navigation; the smaller traders now supply themselves from London or Bristol; and a large trade is also carried on, on English capital, by commission-houses. There are

still a few general merchants, and a few houses connected with the West India and Mediterranean trades; but the only large import trade is timber, of which not less than 15,000 tons are imported yearly. All the other articles which, before the introduction of steam, used to form the trade of the large mercantile houses, are now imported in smaller quantities, by the numerous individuals who either retail within the city, or deal in wholesale with the smaller country towns.

The chief export trade of Cork, is the bacon trade, the butter trade, live stock, and the provision trade. Of these, the bacon trade is on the increase, and so is the export of live stock. The butter trade is thought to be diminishing, but it is still very large; and owing to the greater perfection of the casks made in Cork, which are known to hold the pickle better than any casks made elsewhere, the foreign export trade in butter, is likely to maintain itself. The chief provision trade now, is that afforded by the government contracts.

The manufactories of Cork are not numerous. There is a woollen factory, in which about two hundred persons are employed: and there are also

several hundred foundries, and a considerable manufactory of glass. But distilleries and breweries are the great manufactories of Cork,—of the former, seven were at work when I visited Cork; and of the concerns of Beamish and Crawford, in breweries and in flower-mills, some idea may be formed from the circumstance, stated to me in several quarters as a fact, that one-eighth of the whole rate of the city of Cork is paid by that firm. I have already, when speaking of Cahir, adverted to the difference between a flour mill in England and in Ireland. The Lee mills in Cork, would form the best illustration of this contrast, owing to their very great extent, and the perfection of every thing connected with them. The reason why a flour mill in Ireland is an immense establishment, employing scores of men, and doing business on a large scale, while the English flour mill is a little picturesque house by the side of a rivulet, is, that the Irish miller manufactures on his own account; and this again, necessarily results from Ireland being an exporting country.

From all I could collect, I think it may be stated, that Cork is not retrograding in the extent

of its trade; although the character and channels of its trade have changed: and it may be added, that a steady improvement is visible to all who have had the best opportunities of observation, in the condition of the middle classes; which, indeed, is but the natural result of that more general diffusion of trade to which I have alluded.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Cove of Cork—Descent of the River Lee—Cove Town and Harbour—Means of improvement of Cove—Boating—Excursion to Blarney—Blarney Castle—"The Groves of Blarney"—The Kissing-stone—Journey to Bantry—Bandon—Clonakilty—Ross-Carberry—Picturesque Scenery—Proofs of Poverty—Skibbereen—Bantry, and its Bay—Cultivation of Bog Land—Coral Sand as Manure—Road to Glengariff—Scenery of Glengariff—Passage across the Mountains—Kenmure—Improving Condition of Kenmare—The surrounding Country, and Banks of the Kenmare River—The Barony of Glanrought, and Lord Lansdowne's Estates—Impressions, Facts, and Details—Land and Rents—Condition of the People—Blackwater Bridge—The New Road from Bantry to Kenmare.

EVERYBODY has heard of the Cove of Cork. From the city to Cove, it is about nine miles by the nearest road; and by water, it is eleven. In my journey from Youghall to Cork, I had seen just enough of the banks of the Lee, to give me the desire to see more of them; and I therefore took advantage of the steam vessel, which leaves Cork for Cove every morning. "Have you been to

Cove?" "Have you seen the banks of our river?" are questions often and eagerly put to the stranger in Cork; and well may the question be put: for it is quite certain that if the stranger has visited Cove, he will reply, "Yes, I have; and I have seldom seen any thing more beautiful." The broad river—in reality an arm of the sea, but which has all the appearance of a lake—stretches below the city in a magnificent reach of five or six miles; high swelling banks rise on both sides; and these, the whole way to Passage, exhibit the most charming succession of lawns, woods, and pleasure-grounds, appertaining to the numerous villas that embellish them: and these are indeed villas, or something beyond villas; not boxes with their acre, or half-acre of lawn, shrubbery, and garden; but handsome houses, with room enough about them, to give them an air of independence and respectability. Between Cork and Passage, I counted upwards of thirty such houses, calculated, I should say, for the residence of persons with from 1500*l.* to 3000*l.* a year. Besides these, there are innumerable citizens' boxes nearer to the city; and especially, on the banks of the river

higher up; many of them worthy the name of villa, and all, pretty snug places.

Two villages are passed on the right bank of the river, between Cork and Cove. Black Rock is the first of these; and it is only remarkable for the extensive nunnery, which stands facing the river. Passage is lower down; and is beautifully situated, just where the wide reach of the river ends, and where it contracts into little more than river width. Beyond this narrow reach, the river sweeps to the left, and discovers at a little distance, the magnificent Cove, with its islands and town.

The Cove of Cork, means, in England, a large sea basin, situated near to Cork: but the Cork people call the Cove, the harbour; and by *Cove*, they mean the town which is built there; while many of us at home, scarcely know that there is such a town as Cove. But Cove is not only a town; but a considerable town, and a pretty town; and the most fashionable sea-bathing place in the south of Ireland.

Cove town is situated on the side of the great basin, and on a considerable eminence, and commands a magnificent view over *the* Cove, with its

islands, and rich shores; and—beyond Spike Island —the narrow entrance from the Atlantic, and the ocean beyond it. It chanced to be within a week or two of the regatta, when I visited Cove; and ten or twelve of the yachts were sweeping to and fro, with full sail, under the influence of a fine light breeze. Yachting and boating are quite a passion in this neighbourhood: and although this, like another passion I have named, tends in some degree to encourage the disposition towards improvidence, which is so truly a characteristic of the Irish nation—yet the public benefit by it. Yachting gives employment to many; and the frequent meetings of the club, contribute greatly to the prosperity of Cove; which, however, is far from being so prosperous, as from the many advantages it possesses, it might be expected to be.

Nothing is wanting, to render Cove a most flourishing town, but the outlay of some thousand pounds on the erection of houses for the accommodation of strangers. At present, houses and lodgings are very scarce, and very dear. I inquired the rent of a small furnished house—a mere box, with a few square yards of garden, and

found it to be 20*l.* a month. For another,—a house of two stories,—each story with four windows in front, I was asked a hundred guineas for three months. From these prices, it is evident, that there is no supply equal to the demand; and that 10,000*l.* judiciously laid out, would be very advantageously invested. But nothing is done for the town in this way. Mr. Smith Barry, who is a good resident landlord, and a public spirited man, is prevented I believe by certain circumstances, from granting leases; and the other great proprietor, Lord Middleton, an absentee, either knows nothing, or cares nothing about Cove and its wants. These are misfortunes for Cove: for situated as it is, in so beautiful a country; so near to Cork; with a fashionable reputation, and with extraordinary advantages of climate, much might be made of Cove. I was happy to learn, that a literary society, and library, had lately been established at Cove; and that the institution was flourishing. I ought to have mentioned, when speaking of boating, that Cove and Cork men, row in a peculiar manner. They make a double dip: after immersing the oar, they make a half pull, and then

dip, and pull again. This mode of rowing is not elegant, though it is said to be effective.

Who would be at Cork without visiting Blarney, which is situated about six miles from Cork? The road to it lies up the bank of the Lee, and conducts the traveller through a succession of very pretty scenes. The castle stands upon an eminence, and consists of one very massive square tower. There are many things more picturesque than Blarney Castle; but then, it is Blarney; and is therefore necessary to be visited; and there you 'll see

> "The groves of Blarney, that are so charming"—

and the castle,

> "That was once so ancient"—

and Blarney loch,

> "That holds its own sweet waters,
> That have rested in it since before the flood."

But Blarney loch, holds more than its own sweet waters; for it holds the most beautiful of white water-lilies, that fringe its margin, encircled by the great heart-shaped leaves that almost cover the surface. The Blarney stone, which every one is

expected to kiss; and which embrace, confers on the kisser the power of flattering as much as he pleases, and of commanding the belief of those who are flattered, is on the top of the tower, and quite accessible to all who desire to profit by the opportunity.

From Cork to Bantry, there are two roads: one of these is much shorter than the other; but I preferred the longer road, which passes through several considerable towns—Bandon, Clonakilty, Ross-Carberry, and Skibbereen. This is the road travelled by the mail; and by the mail I travelled. It is not a country possessing great interest; and I therefore contented myself with passing through it. Mail travelling in Ireland is not remarkable for its speed, or precise regulations: it ranks, I think, with the English slowest coaches; but it is a very safe mode of conveyance, for the drivers are extremely cautious; and it is also cheap. In speed, regularity, and even cheapness, Bianconi's cars leave the mails far behind.

The fine country, and good husbandry in the neighbourhood of Cork, do not extend far in this direction. At the distance of but a few miles,

I found the land under very imperfect cultivation; and all of it, susceptible of great improvement. Near to Bandon, the appearance of the country improves; and there is a slight approach to the picturesque, in following the course of the river. Bandon was once a flourishing manufacturing town; but its manufactures have some time ceased: and although the immediate destitution occasioned by the loss of trade, has been somewhat cured by emigration and otherwise, Bandon is at present a poor town, and is stocked with paupers. I did not stop to make any particular inquiries; and can therefore speak of Bandon only as I saw it, *en passant.*

From Bandon, the road winds through a bare, ill-cultivated country, to Clonakilty. Proceeding in this direction, things appeared to be evidently getting worse. The cabins almost reminded me of Callen; and every thing had a poor, neglected aspect. Clonakilty is another decayed town:—there was formerly a good linen trade in it; but that manufacture does not now exist; and the town is at present without any means of support, except that which arises from agricultural labour, and the

more precarious trade of fishing. I noticed much obvious misery; and the number of bare-footed persons had greatly increased. The effect produced on the traveller by the spectacle of bare feet and legs, depends very much on the state of the weather, and upon other circumstances. A healthy looking girl, tripping along a country road, or field path, without shoes or stockings, suggests no want of comfort; but to see the streets of a town, on a rainy day, trodden by multitudes of bare feet —many the feet of old persons—creates a very different impression, and the impression is a just one. It is impossible to believe that any one would walk bare-footed, on wet, ill-paved streets, from choice; but I know it to be often matter of choice in the country. I have seen a gentleman—a man of family and fortune, and a magistrate—walking through the fields, carrying his boots in his hands, for greater coolness and freedom.

After leaving Clonakilty, the country, although not any better cultivated, becomes more agreeable; and the approach to Ross-Carberry, is extremely picturesque. It stands on an elevation, at the head of a long narrow inlet of the sea, flanked by wooded

banks, and itself half hidden in wood. We skirted the town; and stopped just opposite to the Court-house, where a petty sessions had been held. The court had just broken up; and the room emptied itself of as ragged a population as I had yet any where seen. I scarcely saw one woman or girl with shoes or stockings; and here, for the first time, I observed a considerable number of the men also bare-footed. The Court-house is certainly not the place where any one would have gone bare-footed from choice.

After leaving this town, the country became extremely picturesque. We passed along, and round the heads of deep, winding, wooded inlets of the sea,—reminding me, in some degree, of Norwegian scenery on a small scale; and soon after reached Skibbereen, a small ugly town; but a busy and thriving town; enjoying an excellent retail trade, owing to the demand of an extensive surrounding district.

It is a very poor and uninteresting country that lies between Skibbereen and Bantry; the greater part of it is bog land: some small part of it indeed reclaimed; but a large portion which human labour

has never approached. On some parts, where little pools of water had collected, the water-lilies, white and yellow, were numerous; and on others, the beautiful white tufts of the bog-cotton, relieved the dreariness of the prospect. The approach to Bantry is pretty. Rounding a little inlet, one suddenly reaches the margin of the bay; and, keeping its waters on the left, and the domain of Lord Bantry on the right, ten minutes more brings one into the little town, and to the very indifferent inn, or hotel, as I believe it is called, which the town affords.

Bantry lies at the head of the celebrated bay which bears its name; encircled by hills, or at least by considerable elevations, many of which are tolerably cultivated, and wooded. Lord Bantry is the great proprietor here, and is universally well spoken of. His lordship is for the most part resident; and as far as his means will permit, he consults the benefit of the town, and the comfort of the people. Much might be done for Bantry, as a sea-bathing resort; and money judiciously laid out, would certainly be invested to advantage. There was formerly a considerable fishery at Bantry; but

it has now failed—the fish having changed their place of resort.

For the cultivation of the bog land in this neighbourhood, extraordinary facilities are offered; and owing to these, the country appears to be in a very improving condition. I allude particularly to the Bantry sea-sand; which is called there, coral sand, and which is allowed, by universal consent, to be the most efficacious of manures, for the improvement of every description of land, as well as for the reclamation of bog land. Common sea-sand is a very common manure, in many parts of this country; but the superior excellence of the Bantry coral sand is universally admitted, and is owing to the large proportion of lime which it contains.

My course now lay by Glengariff, Kenmare, and Killarney, to Tralee and the lower Shannon. The weather not permitting boating, I hired a car to carry me to Glengariff; and I question whether much was lost by the substitution of a land journey. The road winds round heights, and through hollows, generally wooded; and doubles a number of inlets of the sea; some of them open to the ocean; others having the appearance of lakes; and fine

views are every now and then caught over Bantry Bay, and its mountain boundaries.

Few spots offer a more perfect example of the picturesque, than Glengariff inn. It is situated at the head of a narrow creek, which runs up from the bay. High mountains form one of the boundaries of the creek; and the beautiful domain of Captain White, Lord Bantry's brother, forms the other. Rocks, rushing streams, wooded ravines, quiet coves, and a fine back-ground of mountains, are the elements of the landscape. I was not disappointed in Glengariff, because I had put little faith in the exaggerated reports I had heard and read. Visit Glengariff with the expectation of finding much that is picturesque, and you will not be disappointed; but if sublimity and the magnificence of nature be looked for, they will certainly not be found.

I visited, and was greatly pleased with Captain White's domain: it contains many beautiful spots; commands many fine mountain views; and is adorned by a fancifully built, but judiciously placed mansion. I found no complaint of want of work in this neighbourhood: the new road now in course

of being formed, between Glengariff and Kenmare, employs several hundred hands; and the people upon Captain White's property, are generally comfortable. Few have less land than suffices for the keep of two cows, the rent of which is taken out in labour, at eightpence a-day. I dined sumptuously at Glengariff, on pink coloured,—there called, white trout,—caught an hour before; a dish of scolloped cockles, new potatos, and flour scones; which, with a glass of parliament whiskey, helped to prepare me for the fatigue of the journey to Kenmare.

Most people travel this road on horseback; but not being able to get horse or pony to my mind, I hired a car, and two men to assist. These cannot well be dispensed with, unless the horse drag kindly up, and back well down hill. The road, though excessively bad, and so extremely steep that one must walk nearly the whole of the way, presents so many fine mountain views, that no one has any right to grumble. The rock scenery is particularly interesting; and, mixed with the oak and holly woods, above which the great rocks lift their broad backs, is not only of a picturesque, but

of a very novel character. I left the road, to visit a lodge of Lord Bantry's, remarkable only for its seclusion, and for the clearness of the stream which rushes by; and took the opportunity of also visiting two houses,—in one of which I found a peasant who owned three acres, for which he paid 3*l.*; and in another, a peasant who owned three acres and a half, for which he paid 3*l.* 10*s.* It is a good mode of confirming the truth of what one hears from different individuals, to inquire not only as to their own circumstances, but also into those of their neighbours: if the statements of their neighbours correspond with their own, there is every reason to believe them correct.

I found the road as bad, but not so steep, as it had been represented. I believe the horse could have dragged up the car without assistance; but the men assured me, that in descending, I should find their aid indispensable. Just as we reached the summit of the pass, the mists, which had been floating about the mountains,—veiling the extent of the views, but adding perhaps to their beauty,—dispersed: the sun came brilliantly forth; and the whole of the mountains stood clearly out, with all

their glens, and shadows, and little silvery lakes. The descent I found to be indeed very rapid: the men had brought ropes, with which they endeavoured to lock the wheel, by attaching it to the axle; but the rope was rotten, and broke; and the descent was not accomplished without some scrambling.

From the foot of the mountain, to Kenmare, I passed through an evidently improving country: the road was tolerably good: I saw several comfortable looking houses; and a greater number of lime kilns, the beneficial effects of which were evident in the appearance of the neighbouring land. Every farm, indeed, appeared to have a lime kiln of its own. A few miles before reaching Kenmare, the valley of the Kenmare river, and the river itself, are descried from a height over which the road passes. Soon after, a bridge is crossed; and the road, running parallel with the river, and under a fine arch of trees, reaches the town.

Kenmare is a small, but very prettily situated town. The estuary, called the Kenmare river, reaches some miles above it; and from Kenmare to the sea, the distance is about twenty-six miles.

The estuary varies in breadth, from two or three hundred yards, to upwards of a mile; and presents, in its whole line, the aspect of a magnificent river. I was struck by observing from the windows of the inn, what is rather a novel spectacle in the small Irish towns,—several large houses in course of building; and, upon walking over the town, I counted no fewer than eleven good houses in a state of forwardness: a considerable number of others seemed to be newly built; and although I observed six or eight houses in a ruined condition, I thought myself warranted in concluding, from what I had seen, that these were intended to be replaced by a better description of buildings. This, I afterwards found, was to be immediately done. Extending my walk a little way out of the town, towards the river, I reached a new pier, from which, I was glad to learn, that corn had been shipped, for the first time, last autumn, for the English market. This neat little pier cost 2100*l.*, of which the Marquis of Lansdowne contributed 1200*l.*

I spent two days in and about Kenmare,—one of them, a long summer's day, mounted on a Kerry

pony, riding down the opposite side of the Kenmare river,—riding and walking in and out among the mountain glens; and traversing the greater part of the Barony of Glanrought. I had a double enjoyment in the ramble; arising both from the charming weather and fine mountain views, and from the spectacle of a rapidly improving country, and a comparatively comfortable population.

I think I said, in a former chapter, that from the moment of setting foot in Ireland, I had heard the highest character of the property of the Duke of Devonshire; and that, on that account, I felt a more than usual interest in reaching Lismore. A precisely opposite reason increased the interest of a visit to Kenmare; for I had heard very indifferent accounts of the property of Lord Lansdowne; and was told, in Cork, that I should find a miserable population, who were accustomed to shut up their cabins, and go a-begging for months during the summer. Now, it affords me the greatest pleasure to be able, from minute personal observation and inquiry, to bear testimony to the improving condition of this extensive and naturally barren tract, and to the comparatively comfortable condition of

the people. Formerly, the greater part of this property was held in large farms, by lessees, who sub-let these lands in small portions, and therefore became middle-men. As these leases have dropped, by death, or otherwise, the estates, so held, have been divided into farms of equal size, and let to tenants holding immediately under Lord Lansdowne, who has erected, upon each farm, a comfortable dwelling-house, the whole expense of which, excepting labour, has been defrayed by his lordship.

Riding through this part of Kerry, one is immediately struck by the absence of mud cabins, and, by the presence of these new farm-like houses, every where dotting the slopes. Such things being rarities, I did not content myself with a distant view; but visited ten or twelve of these houses, and they seemed to me well suited to the wants of the individuals by whom they were occupied. There was nothing of pretension about them. I found them to be built of lime-mortar, rough-cast, with chimneys, and with two apartments inside; and generally containing a sufficiency of furniture, and a fair portion of comfort,—speaking always, let it be recollected, with reference to the character

and habits of the people. And, what is most important of all, I did not find that the tenants were paying exorbitant rents. One tenant, occupying a little farm of nine acres, with one of these houses, paid 2*l.* 13*s.* for his possession; that is, about six shillings an acre. From one to two acres of this farm was under tillage; and the rest was in pasture, on which two cows were fed. I found another tenant, occupying eighteen acres, paying for his farm 7*l.* 2*s.*, or eight shillings an acre. This was somewhat more improved land; it supported four cows; and grew potatos, corn, and flax. I found another, with thirty acres, paying 6*l.* 4*s.*, or four shillings an acre. This was poorer land; but the farm supported six cows—though four would have been a more proper number—and grew a little wheat on low spots, and excellent potatos. All of these farms had houses attached; and I certainly feel myself bound to say, from a very minute observation of these houses and lands, that these, and all the other tenants similarly circumstanced, held their land on terms, on which any industrious man might pay his rent, and support his family in that degree of comfort consistent with Irish notions.

There are other advantages too, which these tenants possess. Every one has turf, *à discretion*, for the trouble of cutting and fetching it; and as the whole of these lands lie along the Kenmare river, fish is easily attainable. I counted upwards of forty boats lying on the beach; and to the smaller tenants, whose farms are chiefly in pasture, and require little labour, the privilege of fishing is a most valuable one, both for the purposes of sale and subsistence.

During this day's ride, I counted fifty-seven farm-houses of the description I have mentioned; and I was informed, by the farmers, that I had not seen a third part of the number. Throughout the whole of this tract, there are not any of those mud cabins, with a small patch of potato land, which are so numerous in most parts of Ireland. No tenant holds a less quantity of land than about eight acres. I speak, at present, of land held immediately under Lord Lansdowne; for nothing will strike a traveller, in this country, more than the difference in the condition of land so held, and of that land which is held under several middle-men. I passed through some clusters of as miserable

cabins as I ever beheld—twelve or fifteen of them, congregated together. I went into several of these, and found that they were all held under lessee middle-men—some of them resident, and some absent. These cabins had but a small portion of land annexed, and were, beyond description, wretched abodes; and the inmates of two of them, told me, that they were in the habit of shutting up their cabins, and going, for a month or two, during autumn, in search of work, or livelihood, into Cork county, or elsewhere. If I had merely inquired upon whose estate these people lived, and heard from them that the estate was Lord Lansdowne's, without inquiring whether there was any intermediate holder, I should have thought I had found confirmation of the necessitous condition, and begging propensities, of that noble Lord's tenantry. It is proper for me to state, that I found several larger middle-men, excellent men, and improving landlords, and with no tenantry in the condition I have mentioned.

In the course of a ramble, up one of the distant glens, I fell in with two men holding mountain farms. These, as they, themselves, told me, had

been holders of little more than cabins, under middle-men; and, when the lease expired, and the land was divided and appropriated among the existing tenants, these two, being considered to have least claim, and the original farm not being large enough to be divided among all those who had holdings on it, were turned upon mountain land: eight acres were given to one of the two, and fifteen to the other. One paid a rent of 2*s.* 6*d.* for his farm; the other 4*s.* They told me they could scarcely live out of their land; but I suspect industry was wanting, for, on land close to theirs, I saw good corn and potatos growing; and both lime and sea-sand are plentiful over this country. Idleness will make a pauper of any one; and it is impossible for any landlord altogether to exclude pauperism. Standing with a farmer, at the door of his house, I observed, in a hollow at a little distance, five or six cottages in a ruined condition; but smoke issued from the door, and through holes in the roof of one of them. These, the farmer told me, were the cabins of those who had been on a farm, of which the lease had expired, and which was now divided; but he knew nothing of the

inmate of the smoking cabin. I walked down to the hollow, and found a man, his wife, and three children, living in this roofless and utterly unfurnished hovel; and although, at first, I could get no other information than that they were tenants of Lord Lansdowne's, I ascertained, at length, that they had been tenants of this same cabin, under a middle-man; and when the lease dropped, and the farm was divided, this individual was offered a mountain farm, which he would not accept; and, after having been wandering through different parts of the country, begging, he had returned, with his family, and taken possession of the cabin in which he had formerly lived.

I have dwelt the longer on the events of this day's ride, and on the condition of the property on the Kenmare river, because of the very unfavourable reports I had heard: and finding as I did, that these reports were utterly without foundation; and that this very untractable district,—so unfavourable in many respects to improvement,—exhibited those unerring signs of it, which can result only from a considerate landlord, and an intelligent agent, I felt it to be my duty to state the facts upon which

I have grounded my opinion: and I would only add, that the more distant I was from these estates, the more unfavourable were the reports I heard of them; and in their immediate vicinity, and amongst those best qualified to judge, I heard nothing but the most favourable reports. I would take the liberty of particularly mentioning the Earl of Kenmare,—by universal consent, one of the best of landlords,—who spoke to me in the highest terms of the condition of the property to which I have so particularly alluded.

There is still one other observation I have to make, before proceeding on my journey. When we speak of a poor or a rich tenantry, we ought to speak with reference to the nature of the land. A rich population is not to be expected on a mountainous district, like the barony of Glanrought; and when we find tenants of mountain farms circumstanced as they are in this country, we ought to expect nothing beyond a very moderate share of comfort. Suppose a farm of a hundred acres to have been held by a middle-man, and that thirty tenants are located upon it; this lease drops, and the landlord proceeds to divide. To continue these

thirty tenants upon the hundred acres, giving little more than three acres to each, would only be, to perpetuate pauperism. The landlord has perhaps laid down a rule, that he will have no tenant with a smaller possession than eight acres; because, in an upland country, no man can be comfortable on a less quantity of land: the twelve most improving of the thirty tenants are therefore selected for holdings, each of eight acres, on these hundred acres; and the remaining eighteen become possessors of mountain holdings—not so good, indeed, as those possessed by the selected twelve; but vastly better to an industrious man, than no holding at all: and thus it will be seen, that poor, though not pauper tenants, must exist upon every improving estate, situated in an upland country.

Before leaving Kenmare, I visited Blackwater bridge, which lies amongst the mountains, about six miles distant. It is a very agreeable ride to this spot, and the scene itself is beautiful. The river tumbles through a deep channel, in a ravine finely fringed by oak and ash trees: a high and very picturesque bridge of two arches spans the river; and I had there an opportunity of seeing the

spectacle so often described, of the unwearied efforts of the fishes to get above the fall.

Kenmare, and all this district, will receive incalculable benefits from the fine road now constructing from Bantry to Cork: this road, which takes Glengariff in its line, will connect Killarney with Cork by a most interesting route; and it is intended to throw a bridge over the Kenmare river, or sound, as it is there called, just below the town.

I now left Kenmare, for Killarney. The first part of this excellent road is not particularly interesting. It leads through an upland, bare, and partly cultivated country, in which, however, there are signs of improvement, and some tolerably good houses; and after passing a lake and a few cottages, the descent towards Killarney begins. The first view one obtains of the upper lake of Killarney, is not striking: it disappointed me; but the weather was rather unfavourable for the enjoyment of scenery, and I suspended my judgment, although I could not alter the impression. The descent along the sides of the hills, and through the fine woods with which they are clothed, pleased me

much; and here, for the first time, I saw, almost in its perfection, the arbutus—the far-famed pride of Killarney. I noticed here also, for the first time, that pretty little flower which forms sometimes our garden borders; and which is called, "London-pride," or "none-so-pretty." In descending to the lake, the road passes through a tunnel, which has a good effect, but which was certainly unnecessary; as a little more free use of gunpowder, would have entirely opened up the passage. Soon after passing through this tunnel, the road descends close to the shore of the upper lake, and winds first along part of its margin, and then continues to skirt a part of Turc lake, with the fine wooded elevation called Turc mountain, on the other side. There, however, the road leaves the lakes; and passing through a fine rich country, and skirting several domains, leads into the town.

CHAPTER IX.

The Town of Killarney — Idleness and Pauperism — Lord Kenmare—Bad Feeling among the Aristocracy, and its Causes —The Lakes—The Author's Opinion of Killarney Lakes— Their Character—Upper Lake, Turc Lake, Lower Lake— Glena—Innisfallen—The Echoes—Comparison with the English Lakes—Muckross Abbey—The Earl of Kenmare's Domain.

KILLARNEY suggests to an Englishman, merely a spot where lakes are situated: it is nothing but a name. But to one residing in the neighbourhood, it suggests a biggish, populous, noisy, and not very pretty town. The situation of the town is good, without being at all picturesque; for although, with a fine country around, it lies at least a mile and a half from the nearest point of the lakes. There are two good streets in the town; but many bad alleys, and close filthy lanes and yards; and I regret to say, that there is a large pauper popul·'ion, and a vast number of idle persons,—some from necessity,

and some from choice: for besides its own natural proportion of destitute and unemployed persons, Killarney has in addition, that class of the idly disposed and poor, who are either attracted to every spot much resorted to by strangers, or who are created, by the charm which precarious employment possesses in the estimation of many, over the more certain, but more moderate wages of labour.

Killarney is the property of the Earl of Kenmare; but his lordship is just as little answerable for the faults of Killarney, as the reader of this book. The whole of the town is held under leases for ever; so that Lord Kenmare has no power of improvement in his hands: and this is greatly to be regretted; for a better man, or a better landlord than Lord Kenmare, does not exist; and were it not for the employment afforded on his estate, by this wealthy resident and public spirited nobleman, the pauperism of Killarney would be fearfully great. A considerable part of Lord Kenmare's large estate, is in the hands of middle-men; but his lordship is strenuously exerting himself, to bring about a better system.

There is much bad feeling among the aristocracy

in the neighbourhood of Killarney: and Lord Kenmare is far from being so popular among a certain class, as he deserves to be. Amongst the neighbouring gentry, there are many large middlemen, who are not fond of Lord Kenmare's reforming system; and there are also some of Mr. O'Connell's friends, and even some branches of his family, who cannot forgive the sin committed by the head of the Irish Catholic aristocracy, in being an anti-repealer, and a respecter of order; nor pardon the slight put upon them by Lord Kenmare, in selecting as his deputy lieutenants, men upon whom he thought he could depend for support, in time of emergency. Through these causes, bad feeling has been also excited among the lower classes, which is greatly to be regretted; because Lord Kenmare's religious opinions, and his high rank (for the Irish peasant has much respect for blood) might have otherwise exerted a most powerful influence on his numerous tenantry and dependents,—an influence which would certainly have been well exerted.

But I must not forget, that there are such things as the lakes of Killarney; and although I have no intention of writing a guide to the lakes, I must not

pass over with too slight a notice, objects deserving all the reputation they have acquired. To obtain any correct notion of the beauty of the Killarney lakes, it is necessary to embark at the head of the upper lake, and to descend the chain—a distance of about fifteen miles. The best way of accomplishing this, which may be accomplished in one day, is, to go from the town round the lower part of the lower lake, and by the gap of Dunlow. By this route, one passes some fine seats—particularly that of Lord Headly,—and another, the residence of one of the O'Connell family. The mountain views, too, are fine,—particularly the views of M'Gillicuddy's reeks, and of another mountain, Càrran Tùal, which is now admitted to be the highest of the Irish mountains. This claim always carries some little interest with it; and Mangerton—always an ugly mountain,—divested as it now is, of its claim to being the highest, has become almost insignificant. The height of Mangerton, is 2550 feet; while that of Carràn Tùal, is 3410.

The gap of Dunlow did not seem to me, to be worthy of its reputation: it is merely a deep valley: but the rocks which flank the valley, are

neither very lofty, nor very remarkable in their form; and although, therefore, the gap presents many features of the picturesque, its approaches to sublimity are very distant. I was more struck by the view after passing the gap, up what is called "the dark valley,"—a wide and desolate hollow, surmounted by the finest peaks of this mountain range.

After passing the gap of Dunlow, and descending the steeps on the south side, I embarked at the head of the upper lake, and descended the chain of lakes, through many varied and most enchanting scenes. I saw Killarney to every advantage; for I was favoured by one of those warm days of sunshine and shade, which are particularly calculated for the enjoyment of mountain and lake scenery,—a sky, warm enough to give richness to the landscape; and yet, without the haziness which accompanies heat; and air, just enough to vary the effects of light and shade, on lake and mountain, without disturbing that tranquillity which is the peculiar charm of lake scenery. I had likewise the advantage of Lord Kenmare's boat and rowers, and of the particular instructions which they had received from his lordship.

If the traveller visit Killarney without those exaggerated notions which are apt to be conveyed by a guide book, he will certainly be satisfied and delighted. There is nothing of the sublime about Killarney; but there is all of that kind of beauty, which depends upon the combinations of form and colour. The mountain outlines can scarcely be finer than they are; and in the variety of colour produced by the variety of foliage,—from the beautiful bright green of the arbutus, to the brown mountain heath,—Killarney is eminently distinguished.

To my mind, the upper lake is the most attractive: the mountains are nearest to it; it has not one tame feature; and it is more studded with islands, than either of the other lakes. I landed upon several of the islands, and was delighted with the luxuriant vegetation; and above all, with the arbutus, which is here a great tree; and whose fresh tints, contrast so well with the grey rocks among which it grows. There is a sweet secluded cottage on the shore of this lake, usually called Hyde's cottage, but which is now the property of the Earl of Kenmare.

The narrow passage or channel, between the upper and the other lakes, is at least five miles in length; and offers a charming variety of scenery. Indeed, I doubt whether anything about Killarney, surpasses the scene around Dinas Island. It is a perfect specimen of close river scenery; nor have I any recollection of having seen its equal on the banks of any of the many continental rivers which are familiar to me.

Turc lake, which is reached after passing through the channel, is not at the first glance, so attractive as either of the other lakes; but if the traveller do not coast round Turc lake, he will lose much. It has numerous tiny bays and coves,—beautiful in form,—and offering to the eye of the painter, the most exquisite combination of colour; arising from the union of rock and foliage, and from the infinite variety of fern, lichens, and mosses, that overspread its banks.

The lower lake is preferred by some, to the two others; and although I do not coincide in this opinion, I willingly concede to it, merits of a very high order. Its chief character is beauty; and certainly a spot of more loveliness than Glena, it

would be difficult to find. It is a little cove, at the head of the lower lake; and here Lady Kenmare has built her a pleasure house, on a gentle swell, with the freshest of verdure, and the sweetest of shrubs and flowers around; and set, like an emerald, in the bosom of deep towering woods. Another cottage, at a little distance, has been erected by Lord Kenmare, for the use of strangers; and although I am rather inclined to look upon a picnic as a good dinner spoiled; yet, in such a spot as this, the calamity might be endured.

One of the most beautiful islands on any of the lakes, or, I might perhaps say, on any lake, is Innisfallen. Never saw I such ash-trees as are here,—never such magnificent hollys. A walk round this little paradise well repays one. Although the island contains scarcely twenty acres, it offers a wonderful variety of scenery: little emerald lawns —forest glades in miniature—sylvan amphitheatres —groves, bowers, and thickets of evergreens, and flowering shrubs—and magnificent single trees, worthy of a primeval forest. There is an old ruin too, on the island, and a banqueting-house erected for the accommodation of strangers; and, when I

saw it, it was prepared for a banquet. Lord Kenmare is the owner of Innisfallen; and also of Ross Island, another large and beautiful island on the lower lake. In speaking of Killarney, I must not forget its echoes. I had the advantage of having, in my boat, the Prince of Killarney buglemen, and I had also a cannon of a larger calibre than the public boats carry; and, in the course of our voyage, we often woke the echoes of the hills, and I never heard echoes in greater perfection. There is, certainly, something bordering on the sublime, in the oft-repeated echoes of the mountains, even when these are awoke, not by the deep-mouthed thunder, but by the sonorous bugle. The hills seem, alike, to call to each other; and, although it would have puzzled Burke to trace the emotion of sublimity to terror, it may be traced to its truer origin—power; for—when we hear the call repeated and answered, from mountain to mountain—sometimes loud, and without interval, and then fainter and fainter—and, after a solemn pause, again rising, as if from some far distant glen—our imagination endues the mountains with life; and to their attributes of magnitude, and silence, and solitude, we, for a moment, add the power of listening, and a voice.

It will not be irrelevant, to say a few words in this place, of the comparative merits of the English and the Irish lakes.

Although the lakes of Killarney are three in number, yet they are all contained in one mountain hollow; and certainly there is not, within the same compass, anything in England presenting the same concentration of charms. There is infinitely greater variety at Killarney. In form, and in the outline of its mountain boundaries, the lower lake of Killarney is decidedly superior to Winandermere: and although the head of Ulleswater presents a bolder outline than is any where to be found at Killarney; yet it is upon this outline alone, that the reputation of Ulleswater depends. Elsewhere than at Patterdale, the lake scenery is tame; and the same may be said of Winandermere; which, towards its lower extremity, is almost devoid of attraction. On the contrary, throughout the whole chain of lakes, there is variety at Killarney: tameness is nowhere to be found; and I cannot think that the somewhat nearer approach to sublimity which is found at the head of Ulleswater, can weigh in the balance against the far greater variety in the

picturesque and the beautiful, which Killarney affords. It would be unfair to compare the lakes of Killarney, with Winandermere, Keswick, and Ulleswater; for these are spread over a great extent of country; whereas, the lakes of Killarney are all contained within a smaller circumference than Winandermere: but even if such a comparison were to be admitted, Killarney would outvie the English lakes in one charm, in which they are essentially deficient. I mean, the exuberance and variety of foliage, which adorns both the banks and the islands of the Killarney lakes. Such islands as Ronan's Island, Oak Island, Dinas Island, and Innisfallen, covered with magnificent timber and gigantic evergreens, are nowhere to be found amongst the English lakes. I think it will be gathered, from what I have said, that I accord the preference to Killarney.

No one must visit Killarney, without seeing Muckross Abbey. It is a very beautiful and very perfect remain,—and contains within it, the most gigantic yew tree I have ever seen. Its arms actually support the crumbling wall, and form a canopy above the open cloisters: the trunk of this

majestic yew, measures thirteen feet in circumference. I was somewhat shocked with the want of propriety observed in the management of this spot. Human skulls in hundreds, and bones in thousands, are heaped in every corner; and at each step, it is more than likely, that one will kick some eyeless relic of mortality. The domain of Muckross is beautiful: it lies along the shores of the lower lake, and its shady walks are adorned by innumerable blossoming shrubs; amongst others, the rose of Sharon, and the gum-cistus.

The domain of the Earl of Kenmare is altogether lovely. Its lake and mountain views, and vistas, are beyond praise. I think I have never beheld any thing more captivating, than the vista from the dining-room windows; when the declining sun, streaming from above the mountain tops, falls slanting on the lake, and on the bright velvet lawn that stretches to its shore.

CHAPTER X.

Journey through the Wilds of Kerry—Castlemain Bay—Killorglin — Lord Headly's Estate — Sea Views — O'Connell's Country—The Agitator in his own Country—The Grand Jury Bill—An Anecdote—Cahir-siveen—Condition of the Landholders—Intelligence of the Kerry Peasantry—Examples—Valentia Island—Voyage across the Bay to Dingle—Dingle, and the Condition of the People—Peculiarities of the Inhabitants of this District—Extreme early Marriages—The Catholic Clergy, and proposed Provision for them—Brandon Bay—The Tithe Question—Journey to Tralee.

My course now lay through the wilds of Kerry; and first, to Cahir-siveen, and Valentia Island; which, with the exception of the little islands called the Blaskets, is the nearest point of Ireland to the coast of America. The distance from Killarney to Cahir-siveen, which, on the maps, is generally marked Cahir, is about forty English miles, and the road is altogether a very interesting one; both on account of the scenery through which the traveller passes, and on account of the peculiarities that

attach to the people of these parts, which are said to have been colonized by Spanish settlers, and which long held a close intercourse with the Peninsula.

The first few miles of the road, I had already passed over, in exploring the beauties of Killarney; and till reaching Milltown, there is not much to interest the traveller, excepting the glimpses of the lakes, which are caught from every eminence one passes. Milltown is a very poor town; the property of Sir George Godfrey; who, from all that I could learn, has more the will than the power of benefiting it. Beyond Milltown, the view opens finely, over the upper part of Dingle Bay, and Castlemain: and soon after, I reached the town of Killorglin; the property of the Mullins' family,—and a still poorer place than Milltown. Beyond this town, the road continually increases in interest. The Iveragh range of mountains rises boldly on the left; and a lake, called Lough Carracht, is seen with one end buried among their steeps, and the other, approaching near to the road. A little farther on, the road enters, and traverses for several miles, an extensive bog, also the property of the Mullins, or

Ventry family. I never saw a bog better situated for improvement: it lies close to the bay of Dingle, and at a considerable elevation above it; and at the distance of but a few miles, there is a plentiful supply of limestone; and abundance of sea-sand close at hand. Yet, with the exception of that part of the bog which belongs to Judge Dey, it is entirely neglected, and nearly profitless. Judge Dey has the universal character of being an excellent and enterprising landowner; and, judging by what I saw, I have no doubt, that if this bog were all his property, it would long ago have been covered with luxuriant crops of grain and potatos.

It is on this road also, where lies that estate of Lord Headly,—so well known by the evidence of Mr. Nimmo, before the House of Commons. The exertions made to reclaim that land, and the success which attended them, have been so fully detailed in that evidence, that any imperfect notices of mine are unnecessary. I saw land, which had formerly owned but the dominion of the sea, bearing fine crops of every description; and I saw a population, which, before the exertions of Lord Headly, was little removed from savage, comfortably housed and

clothed, and exhibiting more certain indications of civilization, than are often to be met in the most fertile and central parts of Ireland. In a little bay here, Lord Headly has erected some neat bathing cottages, which are much frequented during the summer. His lordship has an extensive property in this neighbourhood; and it every where exhibits those symptoms of improvement which might be expected.

Nothing can be finer than the road skirting the sea, after leaving Lord Headly's property. In the magnificence of its mountain and sea views, it is little inferior to any of the celebrated roads which have been constructed along the shores of the Mediterranean; and is every way superior to the road from Bangor to Conway, in North Wales. I am sorry I cannot say so much for the population and their dwellings. I never passed more wretched cabins, than on some part of this road. Some of the worst of these, are situated on the property of Lord Lansdowne, but are held under his lordship, by middle-men.

I was now in O'Connell's country: here was the property of Daniel O'Connell, Esq., or the

Liberator, as the people called him; there, the property of Charles O'Connell, Esq.; and there again, the property of another O'Connell: but the greater part of the O'Connell property—almost all that of *the* O'Connell, is held under head landlords; and he, is only an extensive middle-man. Near to Cahir-siveen, is the birth-place of the great agitator. It is a ruined house, situated in a hollow near to the road; and when I reached the spot, the driver of the car pulled up, and inquired whether I would like to visit the house. But the driver of my car, was not a native of these parts; for be it known to the reader, that O'Connell is less popular in his own country than he is elsewhere. If you ask an innkeeper, or an innkeeper's wife, any where in O'Connell's district, what sort of a man their landlord is? "Och, and sure he 's the best o' landlords!—he takes the childer by the hand, and he wouldn't be over proud to dthrink tay with the landlady." But if you step into a cabin, the holder of which owns Daniel O'Connell, Esq., as his landlord; and if you ask the same question, he 'll scratch his head, and say little any way. Shortly before I visited Cahir-siveen, there was a

road-presentation in that neighbourhood, and the rate payers, who have now a vote in these matters, refused at first to pass it, unless the O'Connells would pay two-thirds of the expense; because, said they, "the O'Connells have lived long enough out of road presentations!!"

As I have mentioned this subject, I will add, that I have reason to know, from unquestionable authority, that before the late Grand Jury Bill was enacted—that is, up to the present time—there had been much shameful grand jury jobbing in many of the Irish counties; particularly in Tipperary, Clare, Limerick, Kerry, and Roscommon. A grand juror of Tipperary called one morning, previous to the holding of the quarter sessions, upon a brother grand juror—a man, however, of much greater influence than himself,—and pulling out, and unfolding voluminous plans and papers, began to explain the advantages which would accrue to the public, from the construction of a certain road through his, the expounder's property. "Put your papers in your pocket, man," said the man of influence; "say nothing about the public advantage. I 'll just say it 's a little job of my

own;" and so things were managed. There can be no doubt that the Bill will work most advantageously for the public service, and most fatally for jobbers. It cannot be denied, however, that there will be exceptions from its benefits. A few days later, when I was at Tralee, a presentment account was opposed by several magistrates, on the ground that the road had not been repaired as it ought to have been; that the money had been mis-spent, and that the road was at that moment in a bad condition. The rate payers, however, being the majority, passed the account: because, said they, although the road might not be good enough for their Honours' springed carriages, it answered very well for them.

I reached O'Connell's town, Cahir-siveen, in time for an excellent fish dinner of haddock, and mullet; and the three or four hours that intervened between dinner and bed time, I spent in rambling about the environs of the village, and in the neighbouring country. The town is said to be rather improving; though, from its situation, I cannot think the improvement can ever be great; for it lies within a very dangerous navigation,

high up the stream that there forms an inlet of the sea; and in strong westerly winds, the only safe entrance, between the mainland and Valentia Island, is all but inaccessible.

The country around Cahir-siveen is extremely wild, and but very partially reclaimed: and the condition of the people far from being comfortable. I visited several wretched cabins, and found the inmates paying exorbitant rents. Land is not let here by the acre; but by the quantity of land fit to support a cow. I found one man owning land for six cows, paying at the rate of 50*s.* per cow; and at that time, the price of butter was such, that not more than 40*s.* could be got for the produce of each cow. Others, I found paying in precisely the same proportion. The greater industry of the people—and, I may add, the greater intelligence, universal among the Kerry peasantry,—help them with their indifferent bargains. I saw in many of their cabins, beautiful examples of industry—every branch of a family occupied in doing something useful; and I did not address one individual, from whom I did not receive answers, that would have done credit to persons of any

education; and yet, on asking one individual who had conversed with me readily and sensibly upon many subjects, how many weeks there were in a month,—I was answered, that there were two. Nature has done much for these people—education little.

Walking along a mountain path, I overtook a girl of about fourteen or fifteen years old—I speak by guess, for it is rarely in this country, that a girl can tell her age. She carried a basket, in which were from four to five dozen of eggs. I asked where she had got the eggs?—She had been round the country buying them cheap. Where was she taking them to?—She was going to send them, and some dozens more, with Mich O'Sullivan's carts, to Cork.—Upon whose account was she buying the eggs?—On her own. On her own account?—Yes. Who gave her the money?—The parson (she was a Protestant) had lent it to her: some time ago, her cousin had sent a basket of eggs with Mich O'Sullivan, to Cork, and he had made three shillings. This was certainly a curious example of enterprise and industry. I returned into the town with the girl, and saw her father:

he was a small landholder; and he said, Biddy went, after her day's work was done, and merchandized for herself.

The views about Cahir-siveen are interesting—of a wild and solitary character. The mountains jut into the sea on every side; the island of Valentia lies opposite, separated from the main land, by a narrow channel; and the small town, enclosed among the brown mountain slopes, seems like a place at the world's end.

The next day, I visited Valentia Island: but my visit to it was a hurried one; for the navigation of Dingle Bay is safe only in fine weather; and being anxious to reach Ennis at the opening of the Clare assizes, it was necessary that I should take advantage of the favourable weather, to cross the bay to Dingle. A great part of Valentia Island, is under tillage; and there is a considerable range of pasture. The houses of the tenants, I found of a superior description; but their internal comforts scarcely corresponded; for land is high let. Nearly all, if not all the island, belongs to the Knight of Kerry, who is much respected in this neighbourhood; and who has done considerable service to

the place—not so much by outlay of money, as by example, in various modes of improvement. The slate quarry on the island is extensive and valuable, and is at present in the Knight of Kerry's own hands; and is worked for export. It is used for flagging, for fish slabs, and for many purposes to which marble has been usually applied; and finds a ready market in England. Several good houses are scattered over Valentia Island, besides those of the farmers. The house of the knight is situated near to the sea, on an eminence, on the east side of the island, and near to a little glen, and small rivulet.

I returned from Valentia Island to Cahir-siveen, just in time to save the tide, and embarked in a heavy fishing-boat, which was about to return to Dingle. With a smart breeze the voyage may be accomplished into two hours, but I had no such good fortune. There was scarcely a breath of wind, and we were forced to row the whole way; sometimes, indeed, profiting by the brief course of a passing breeze to hoist our sale; but losing more than we gained, by the suspension of rowing. This must, indeed, be a frightful navigation, with a

heavy rolling sea before an Atlantic north-wester; and, being only desirous of reaching Dingle before night-fall, I did not regret the slowness of our progress, and the tranquillity of the sea, which encouraged a more leisurely observation of the fine scenery that lay on every side. The tide did not permit us to steer directly for Dingle; and, accordingly, we made the opposite shore, considerably to the west, and then rowed under the rocks, eastward, passing in succession, Ventry Harbour, numerous bold headlands, and singularly formed rocks, and many curious sea-worn caves, never visited but by the sea-fowl, that are congregated in thousands along this coast,—riding on the wave, covering the rocks, and wheeling on the sides of the cliffs. I noticed many varieties of sea-fowl: some were of the purest white; some were white, all but the tips of the wings; and some were speckle-bodied, with red feet and bills.

Dingle harbour is what sailors call a blind harbour; that is, a harbour that, from the sea, is not discovered to be a harbour. It is exceedingly difficult to make this haven during a strong westerly wind; and vessels passing it by, and run-

ning to the eastward, are infallibly lost on Castlemain bar. When once entered, however, Dingle harbour is a very secure one. A vessel of six hundred tons' burden may go up to the pier, with a spring tide; and vessels of any tonnage may find secure anchorage within the inlet.

The town of Dingle is situated on the slope of the hills, with fine, and very high mountains round it on all sides, excepting one, where the sea forms a large inland lake. It is rather a good-looking town. The number of respectable houses is much greater than one would expect to find in so small and remote a place; and good gardens are generally attached to them; so that, viewed from a distance, the town appears to be well screened with wood. But Dingle is not a flourishing town. A thriving linen trade was once carried on here; and no trade is so beneficial as this, in giving employment to different descriptions of persons. But this trade is entirely fallen, and has not been replaced by any other. There is, however, a considerable and an increasing export trade in corn and butter. About ten cargoes, averaging each two hundred tons, leave Dingle yearly, with corn and butter, for

British ports. The town enjoys also a tolerable retail trade. The neighbouring country, as well as Cahir-siveen, and the opposite side of the bay, are supplied from Dingle; and one or two dealers lay in their stocks themselves, direct from England. There is also a considerable fishery at Dingle:—upwards of fifty fishing-boats, with about 350 men, afford the means of support to about 1200 persons. Dingle supplies Tralee market with the finer kinds of fish; and fish-hucksters traffic regularly, with horses, between Dingle and Tralee.

I found a considerable number of unemployed persons in and about Dingle, and labour extremely cheap. Six-pence a day, and seven-pence at most, is the usual rate without diet; and it is the universal practice, in this part of the country, to work, during the summer, from five in the morning until seven in the evening. The provisions of the poor, however, are cheap here. I found potatos only 2½*d.* a stone.

The land around Dingle is in a very indifferent condition, as regards the occupiers. A great part of it is the property of the Mullin's family, held under a trust, created by a former Lord Ventry,

and is badly managed. Tenants occupy miserably small lots; and being unable to live on the produce of their land, go, half the year, a begging, or in search of employment. Fuel, too, is scarce in this country; but the facility of catching fish perhaps counterbalances this disadvantage.

The Peninsula, or stripe of land, reaching from Tralee, westward, to the Atlantic, of which Dingle is the chief town, is said to have been colonized from Spain; and, in many respects, the people yet retain strong traces of their origin. Here, we see women with dark hair and jet-black eyes—and dark brown-headed boys, that might have served as a study for Murillo—and men, whose gait and complexion only require to be set off by a Spanish hat, jacket, and girdle, to pass for bandits of Andalusia. Nor is the resemblance visible only in the aspect of the people: I fancied I discovered more pride, and more reserve; and, in a quarrel which I chanced to see, there was less vociferation, and, as it seemed to me, a graver deportment than I had elsewhere observed. But this might possibly be fancy: it is certain, however, that the features of many of the people are decidedly Spanish; and

in the names of places, a Spanish origin may often be traced.

Marriages in this district are contracted at an earlier age than in any part that I had yet visited. Fourteen and thirteen, are common ages for the marriage of girls; fifteen is not considered at all an early age for marriage; and there are even instances of their having been contracted at so early an age as twelve. This is, on many accounts, a great and public evil: and, among the benefits which might be expected to be derived from the assignment, under cautious regulation, of some government provision for the Catholic clergy, the discouragement of early marriages would certainly be one. It is well known that marriage is among the most fruitful sources of profit to the priest; and if the abolition of baptismal and marriage dues were made consequent upon such a provision as I have alluded to, it would be no longer the interest of the priest to encourage, or countenance—as it is certain he often does—the unwise, and almost criminally early marriages of the peasantry. I am far from meaning to say that such encouragement is universal; I know, however, that it is frequent;

and the Catholic priest, who betters his condition by the marriages of his flock, would be committing an act of rare virtue were he not merely neutral, but were even to discourage early marriage. At all events, it appears to me, that men's interests ought never to be placed in opposition to the public good; and that—if legislation can prevent this—legislators are bound to apply the remedy. I will mention another advantage which would certainly result from such a provision for the Catholic clergy. It would encourage a more respectable class of men to become members of the priesthood; and this would essentially contribute towards the peace of the country. The warmest defenders of the Catholic clergy would admit, that many, are utterly disqualified from exercising judiciously, and in a spirit suited to the times, the functions of their calling, owing to the sphere of life from which they have been taken: and, that some certain provision, by way of glebe, or otherwise, would tempt a better order of men to enter the priesthood, cannot I think admit of the smallest doubt. I may probably again recur to this subject: at present, I shall only add, that I would look for benefit from the provision

alluded to, rather in its results upon early marriage, and in the encouragement it would give to a better order of clergy, than in the effect which some suppose it would have, in diminishing the influence of the priesthood.

The inns, in this part of the country, put me in mind of those I had seen in the Engadine. The houses are very spacious; and the keeping of the inn is only one branch of the business of the inn-keeper. Both at Cahir-siveen, and at Dingle, the inn-keeper kept an extensive shop for the sale of groceries, and of all kinds of cloth and haberdashery goods.

Before leaving Dingle, I crossed the mountains to the heights above Brandon Bay, which lies on the north side of the Peninsula. It was a long and fatiguing ascent; but it was repaid by the very striking and extensive view from Connor's Hill, from which you look down upon the sea on both sides: the view on one side embracing Dingle Bay, as far as Valentia Island, with the town and fine harbour immediately below; and on the other side, comprehending Brandon Bay, and various fine headlands, with high mountains on both sides, and

deep and wide mountain valleys; and innumerable tarns, dark and still, lying in the hollows of the hills; and distant cascades, and nearer torrents; and all, in short, that lends interest to mountain scenery.

Returning from this excursion, I remarked some bog land brought newly into a state of partial cultivation; and upon making some inquiries, I was told that this was done, because no tithe would in future be exigible from it. There and everywhere I have yet travelled, I have found the tithe question a difficult one to grapple with. Utterly and at once to extinguish tithes, every one in Ireland admits, would be only making a present to the landlord: and any adjustment that leaves it in the landlord's power to shift the burden from himself, would confer little benefit on those for whom it is intended. Even, however, if the landlord should succeed in laying the addition upon the rent, it is better that the tenant should pay the charges upon his possession in a lump, than by separate demands; and that all the charges should be exigible by the landlord: a farmer could better calculate the amount he had to pay; and would know when to be pre-

pared; and as it cannot be the true interest of the landlord unnecessarily to distress a good tenant, more indulgence might in general be expected from him, than from the inexorable tithe-proctor.

After spending an interesting day or two at Dingle, I left it for Tralee. The road traverses the mountains, diagonally from the Dingle, to the Tralee side; and leads the traveller through an improving country, and through scenery of a highly attractive character. Several inconsiderable villages are passed through: a gap, far superior to the gap of Dunlow, is seen on the left, with a fine lake half hidden in it; and from the summit of the mountain ridge, a splendid prospect opens over Tralee Bay, across to Kerry Head, and the Shannon Mouth. I reached Tralee a little before dusk, and found the streets and every inn crowded, —for the quarter sessions had opened the day before: but I succeeded in finding comfortable lodgings.

CHAPTER XI.

Tralee—The Quarter Sessions in Tralee—The Civil and Criminal Cause List—State of Kerry—Faction—The Police of Ireland—Litigiousness of the Irish—Prosperity of Tralee—Trade—Prices of Provisions—Unemployed Poor—Journey to Listowel and Tarbert—Traits of Character—First View of the Shannon—Details—Tarbert and the Shores of the Shannon—Irish Inns of the West—Steam Navigation on the Shannon—Ascent of the Shannon to Limerick—Road to Ennis—Clare, and the River Fergus—Ennis—Land, and High Rents—Environs of Ennis.

I have no hesitation in pronouncing Tralee, the county town of Kerry, to be altogether the most thriving town I have seen since leaving Clonmel; and, in some respects, it leaves Clonmel behind it. Tralee has streets that would not disgrace the best quarters of any city; and these, not streets of business, which it also has,—but streets containing gentlemen's houses, or, at all events, houses which no gentleman might be ashamed to live in.

I have said, that I arrived at Tralee when the

quarter sessions were about to be held; and I did not neglect the opportunity afforded me: for, upon no occasion, is so much insight obtained at so small an expenditure of time and labour, into the character of the peasantry; and even into the state of the country. Being accommodated with a seat on the bench, I had better opportunity for observation, and for noting the proceedings.

The first thing that strikes a stranger, attending a court of this kind in Ireland, is, the military air of the place,—the armed police in military uniform, guarding the avenues, and stationed throughout the court. The next thing that strikes one, is the intense interest that seems to be excited among the people. But I soon found, that there were other and more important subjects of wonder than these. This was a quarter session for one half of the county of Kerry; and can the reader guess how many civil causes were to be disposed of? There were *fourteen hundred and seventy causes* entered for judgment; and the assistant barrister informed me, that this was not considered a heavy list. Seventy-seven of this number were ejectments; and the tremendous remainder was chiefly made up of

breaches of contract,—indicating, I fear, at the same time, a woful lack of veracity and just dealing; and a most indomitable spirit of litigiousness.

Nor was I less struck, nor do I believe the reader will be less struck, with the list of criminal cases handed to me. The following was the classification:—

Assault	47
Riotous Assembly	74
Aggravated Assault	1
Rescue	34
Rescue Decree	21
Larceny	10
Embezzlement	4
Taking and retaining forcible possession	4
Libel	1
Injury to the Freehold	3
In all	199

One hundred and ninety-nine criminal cases at a quarter sessions, for one half of the remote and quiet county of Kerry!! and of these, *one hundred and seventy-four* cases implying the undue exercise of physical force!! But it is necessary that I should here enlarge a little. In England, when we speak of a disturbed county, we mean, a county

in which there are movements directed to some particular purpose,—or arising out of opposition to some particular law,—or insurrectionary movements; and I have not the least doubt, that if, in Parliament, the condition of the west of Ireland were spoken of, it would be said to be perfectly tranquil; and we might, probably, have tirades against the large and expensive police establishment kept up in a quiet country, of which the county of Kerry might be cited as an example. But to call a county quiet, in one half of which, during three months, there have been seventy-four examples of riotous assembly, and fifty-five cases of rescue,—together with nearly fifty cases of personal assault, is a perversion of words. These assemblies are not, indeed, assemblies of white-feet, or peep-of-day boys; nor are they directed against the collection of tithes,—or of rent,—nor have in view any express political purpose;—and so far, indeed, they are less important than if they had any of these objects;—but they are riots for all that,—disturbances of the peace,—assemblages of persons who fight with each other, and maim each other, and kill each other; and no one, but through the grossest igno-

rance of Ireland, or to serve party purposes, would speak of the present police of Ireland, otherwise than in terms of the highest commendation, and as a force at present absolutely requisite to prevent the complete disorganization of society—even if there were no agitators, and Ireland had no elements of political or agrarian agitation. I have no hesitation in saying, that for putting down these private factions, out of which arise the disgraceful and savage brutalities, that are often perpetrated by wholesale, legislation is just as requisite as it is for any more specific purpose. These factions, which are not understood in England, create far more disturbance, and far more bloodshed, than any of the associations entered into for illegal purposes. I was in this county at the time of the memorable affair of Balybunian, when nearly two score persons were driven into the Shannon, and drowned, and knocked on the head like so many dogs; and will anybody say, that premeditated fights of this kind, solemnly resolved upon months before, do not require as vigorous an intervention of the law, as any disturbance arising out of a tithe distraining! Where magistrates are afraid to act, and witnesses

dare not swear; and where, in one reputed quiet county, more riots, attended with loss of life, take place in one month, than in all England and Scotland for a year, it is surely idle to talk of the expense of a police.

But let me observe, that the causes of these disturbances are the same as those which answer to the call of political agitation—imperfect civilization, and want of employment. Education, employment for the people, and a vigorous administration of the law, will dissolve the elements of these, as well as of all disturbance; and although at this moment, a strong police is absolutely requisite to maintain in Ireland anything like order and decorum, I have as little doubt, that healing measures, coupled with an extensive and practicable system of education, will gradually diminish the necessity for coercion of any kind. Let government continue to act with moderation; let the tithe question be settled; let the extremes of all parties be discouraged; let Irish interests be not sacrificed to a too paltry economy; let the infirm and the aged poor be cared for; let the superabundant labour of Ireland be thrown upon her wastes; let public works be

encouraged; let agitation for all dishonest purposes, be firmly met, and agitators scorned; let the church be wisely, but thoroughly reformed; let, in short, the government continue to shew—what the people of England already give it credit for—a sympathy with the real evils of the country, and a determination,—spite of landlords,—spite of church dignitaries,—spite of agitators of all kinds,—to do justice; let all this be, and Ireland will continue but a little while longer, the distracted, poverty-stricken, crushed, and unhappy land, which a century of neglect and misgovernment has made it.

The litigiousness of the Irish peasantry is most remarkable; and I am inclined to think that litigiousness is encouraged by the frequency of holding sessions. Law seems to be always at hand; and it accustoms the people too much to these exhibitions: it is a fact, that where petty sessions have been made less frequent, the quantity of business has greatly diminished. A calculation was made for me, by a gentleman well acquainted with these matters, of the number of cases of all kinds tried in the county of Kerry during a year; and upon a fair average of cases tried at each of the petty

sessions and manor courts, the whole number amounted to the enormous sum of 33,000. Wherever I have seen the quarter sessions in Ireland, it has impressed me favourably; and I doubt whether the contemplated alterations will be beneficial. I am strongly inclined to be of opinion, however, that the peace of Ireland would be greatly preserved by the establishment of a paid magistracy. Local connexion is inimical to the steady and fearless administration of justice; and it is a fact, that strangers, brought into office as police inspectors, have more influence among the people, and can effect more, than the magistrates who have been always resident among them.

The indications of prosperity visible in the outward appearance of Tralee, I found upon inquiry, to be just indications. Twenty years ago, Tralee was little else than a congregation of cabins; and within a far shorter period, it has received,—as a merchant of the town expressed it,—its new face.

From September, 1833, till May, 1834 (eight months), 4000 tons of wheat were exported from Tralee, 3000 tons of oats, and 400 tons of barley. Besides this very considerable quantity, there was

bought in the market for home consumption, 1000 tons of wheat, 70 tons of oats, and 4000 tons of barley. Since the year 1825, the corn export trade of Tralee has increased about one-third; and the home trade, about one-fifth. The butter export trade of Tralee used to be considerable; but it is greatly on the decline,—scarcely one-twentieth part of the quantity being now exported, comparatively with the year 1825.

The retail trade of Tralee is an extensive and improving one; and many of the dealers are wealthy. As good shops are to be found in Tralee, as in Cork; and the stock, in many of them, is very extensive. A ship canal is now constructing from the bay to the town; but its probable utility is doubted by many. It is thought that the strong westerly gales, which blow into the bay, will accumulate sand in the canal, and obstruct the navigation.

I was at Tralee on market day, and I never recollect to have seen a busier place. Independently of an extensive supply of country produce, there was a very abundant exhibition of all kinds of manufactured goods, and apparel; and every shop in the town was crowded to the door.

The following are the prices of some articles of provision in Tralee. Beef, averages 3*d.* per lb.; mutton, 3½*d.*; pork, 2*d.*; a fine turkey, in the season, costs 1*s.* 9*d.*; a fine goose, 10*d.*; and fine fowls, 8*d.* a couple; a good codfish can be bought for about 8*d.*; and oysters are 3*d.* a dozen; potatos, when I was at Tralee, in the scarce season, were 3*d.* per stone. Servants' wages are very low in this neighbourhood. A man servant does not receive more than 8*l.*, and a female servant never more than 3*l.*; and often as little as 2*l.* and even 30*s.* House-rent in Tralee is high,—higher than in any English county town: but, a little way out of Tralee, it is moderate enough. A gentleman, whom I visited, had an excellent house, somewhat more than two miles from Tralee, beautifully situated on the bay, with spacious out-houses, and with ten English acres of good land, for which he paid 45*l.* Estimating the land at 2*l.* 10*s.* per acre, (for land around Tralee lets high), he paid 20*l.* for his house and its accommodations.

The town of Tralee is the property of Sir Edward Denny; he grants leases on lives, renewable for ever; but it is not in his power to let

ground at a lower rate than 10*l.* an acre. He is also the chief proprietor of the surrounding country; but the occupying tenants chiefly hold under middle-men, who extract the utmost rent that competition can produce. I will take this opportunity of saying, that a gradual reduction of rents in Ireland, is to be expected from the system now so general among landowners, of getting quit of middle-men, at expired leases. Landlords, I think, are beginning to see their interest more clearly in this matter; and if, as I earnestly hope may speedily be the case, some legislative enactment compels, or at least encourages, the cultivation of waste lands, and the employment of the able-bodied labourer on public works, competition for land will gradually diminish; and rents will at length find their just level.

I found at Tralee, a greater number of unemployed poor, than from the prosperity of the town, I could have expected. But the recent improvements in building houses, and in the erection of a new court-house, which is every way a handsome and commodious structure, attracted a large supply of labour to the town; and these being now almost

completed, the demand has ceased. The canal, indeed, employs many; but wages are extremely low; and in this rainy climate, it often happens that the labourers, after working in the canal from five in the morning until eleven in the forenoon, are discharged for the day with the pittance of two-pence; and thus, these men and their families, are made paupers for that day.

There is a spa in the neighbourhood of Tralee, considerably resorted to for its waters; the situation of the place is pleasant; and a number of pretty country houses have been erected in the vicinity.

It was the evening of market day, when I left Tralee for Listowel. I was seated on the mail car; and as the streets were thronged with carts and people, a little boy marched before, blowing a trumpet; while the driver, with an air of extra-ordinary importance stood up in his seat, and from one end of the street to the other, bawled out to the "boys" and the "gintlemen" to make room for his majesty's mail coach.

The country between Tralee and Listowel is naturally fertile, with here and there some bog land, which might be made fertile. The children

whom I saw standing about the cabin doors, or tending the pigs or goats, appeared altogether regardless of covering; several, I noticed with nothing but shirts; apparently unconscious that clothes were any comfort: and one boy, with neither shirt, nor any nether garments whatever—with nothing but a jacket, and a great rose stuck in the button-hole, could not but excite a smile.

Listowel is approached by crossing a long bridge over the river Feale. The town is but a poor one; but as it was late when I reached it, and not having it in my power to stay longer than that night, owing to the necessity of reaching Ennis, I had no leisure for inquiries.

I left Listowel at a very early hour, for Tarbert, that, if necessary, I might cross the Shannon into Clare the same day. An early journey sometimes shews a traveller what he could not see at a later hour. Some of the cabins by the way side were still closed; and the inmates of others had newly opened their doors. It was Sunday morning; and I observed that the articles of apparel meant to be displayed at mass, and which had been washed the night before, had been left on the hedges all night—

a practice that speaks favourably for the honesty of the people. I observed also, that many of the Kerry peasantry in this district, were not so poor, as from the appearance of their cabins, one might have guessed them to be. Out of one cabin, a calf might be seen picking its way; a couple of goats issuing from another; while within, might be seen and heard, the cocks and hens, which had not yet been turned out to earn their day's bread.

It was this morning, that, for the first time, I saw that noblest of all rivers in the British European dominions—the Shannon. It was impossible to look upon the Shannon, without feeling deeply interested; and this for many reasons. I knew it to be the greatest of all our rivers; I knew it to be a great artery, by means of which, improvement might be carried, and capital circulated, through the remotest parts of Ireland; I saw it to be in itself, a noble stream, rivalling the finest of the continental rivers; and an additional interest was communicated to it, from the belief that, to my countrymen, that part of Ireland lying to the west of the Shannon, is a *terra incognita*.

But as I shall, for some time, have frequent

occasion to speak of the Shannon, and as it will be our companion during a considerable part of this journey, I will here speak a little more in detail of this noble river; and, in doing so, I shall not scruple to avail myself of the valuable information given by Mr. Williams, in a pamphlet published by him, upon the internal navigation of Ireland.

The source of the Shannon is reputed to be Loch Allen; but some say, and I have no doubt those who say so are right, that Loch Allen has its feeders, and they therefore, though incorrectly perhaps, place the source of the Shannon higher than Loch Allen. By and by, I shall visit Loch Allen, and shall probably then be able to tell more accurately which is the source of the Shannon. The course of the river is two hundred and thirty-four miles; and the most singular feature about this great river is, that throughout its whole course, it possesses a sufficient depth of water for the purposes of internal intercourse. With some trifling interruptions, it is navigable from its mouth to its source. The other singular characteristic of this river is, its extraordinary diversity. It is partly river, and partly lake. In the upper part

of its course, it expands into two great lakes, Lough Derg, and Lough Ree, each of them twenty miles in length,—and forms, in its course from Leitrim to Limerick, many smaller lakes, varying from one to three miles in length. Below Limerick, to the sea, a distance of sixty miles, it forms a magnificent estuary, varying in breadth, from one to eight miles, and capable of bearing to the quay of Limerick, a vessel of 400 tons burden. The whole fall of the river amounts to 146 feet 10 inches. Mr. Williams says, "From the circumstance of the Shannon running through the centre of the kingdom, it may be compared, for the purposes of intercourse, to double that length of coast."

The Shannon washes the shores of no fewer than ten counties,—Leitrim, Roscommon, Longford, Westmeath, King's County, Galway, Tipperary, Clare, Limerick, and Kerry.

"How," says Mr. Williams, "can we convey to English eyes, the picture of the Shannon through its great course?" The fact is, there is nothing more required, than to glance at a good map of

Ireland, in order to obtain a tolerable notion of the nature and extent of this noble river, and of its value, as a means of improvement. But I shall answer Mr. Williams' question, in his own words. "Let us suppose a navigable river," (navigable throughout its course) "taking its rise in some distant county of England, as far from Liverpool, as Essex, or Middlesex. Suppose it occasionally spreading itself into noble and picturesque sheets of water, of more than twenty miles in length, with numerous islands, receiving the waters of many rivers, and stretching its bays into the adjacent counties, as it were to increase the measure of its utility and beauty. See it winding its way through Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, and the rich soil of Leicestershire; and after passing Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, falling into the estuary of the Mersey, in Lancashire. See it presenting to each of these counties, the benefit of fifty miles of navigation;—and we shall have a correct view of the extent and capabilities of this river." I trust the reader will become better acquainted with the

Shannon, as he proceeds with me on my journey; and that when we stand together near to its source, we shall almost be able to write a pamphlet on it ourselves. Prefixed to the second volume of this work, a chart of the course of the Shannon, reduced from Mr. Williams' map, and with some additions of my own, will materially assist the reader.

It was on approaching Tarbert, that I ran into this digression on the Shannon. I now resume my narrative.

Tarbert is a very small town, situated at the head of a little bay of the Shannon, which, from the entrance to Tarbert Bay, to the nearest point of the opposite coast of Clare, is about two and a half miles broad. Tarbert Bay is prettily wooded; and the banks of the river, below Tarbert, are adorned by several handsome seats. It was Sunday, and I had an opportunity of seeing the peasantry of this neighbourhood, with holiday looks, and holiday clothes. I saw more incongruity of apparel here, than I had any where else seen; and a greater partiality for gaudy colours. Red petticoats, and bright yellow shawls, were much in vogue; and so smart were the women's caps, that every hood was

thrown back, to let them be seen. It was singular enough to see some tolerably neat holiday apparel, accompanied by bare feet and legs; I fear it was not the will that consented—for although it is no doubt often matter of choice to go barefooted, yet this certainly could not have been the case on Sunday.

I have already spoken of the goodness of the Irish inns. My remarks, however, were made before I had travelled into the remoter parts of the country; and when I remarked to any Irish person, that I had found the inns better than I expected, I was told to suspend my judgment until I had visited the less frequented parts of the country. I have now travelled through the remotest extremities of the wilds of Kerry; and I find no reason to retract the opinion I expressed. At Kenmare, at Cahir-siveen, at Dingle, at Listowel, and now at Tarbert, I found comfortable, and clean inns. I have at this inn, a well and newly carpeted room, with good mahogany chairs, three excellent mahogany tables, a handsome glass over the chimney piece, clean chintz window curtains, white blinds, and the walls of the room well

papered. My bed-room is as unexceptionable; and every thing is comfortably served up at table. Prices continue nearly the same: dinner is generally charged 2*s.*, tea 1*s.*, breakfast 1*s.* 3*d.*, bed 1*s.* 8*d.*, and whiskey 5*d.* per glass, with water and sugar.

I spent the afternoon in walking five or six miles down the shore of the Shannon, as far as Ardmore point. The evening was remarkably fine, and the atmosphere clear; so that the whole of the opposite coast of Clare, as far as Kilrush, was beautifully distinct; and I was able even to see clearly, the round tower on Scattery Island.

The reader, probably, knows, that there is a steam navigation on the Shannon, both above and below Limerick. One of the company's vessels plies between Limerick and Kilrush, and takes passengers from Tarbert, if any there be; and I, of course, took advantage of it the next day, to go up to Limerick. In order to embark, it is necessary to walk to Tarbert Island, a mile distant; but there is some talk of constructing a pier, either at Tarbert, or at Glyn, a village a mile or two farther up the river. The fares on the Shannon are very moderate; the distance from Tarbert to Limerick,

is thirty-five miles, and the fare is 4*s*. The vessels, too, are excellent, and in every way well appointed.

Soon after leaving Tarbert, the river contracts; for on the Clare side, a narrow headland pushes itself far into the river. The Clare side is here sloping and cultivated, without much wood, which is more abundant on the other side of the river; and on the Kerry side, the bank is also adorned by several villas. Two or three miles above Tarbert, we were opposite to Glyn village, and to the very handsome residence of the Knight of Glyn, with its fine woods around it. The village looks neat and clean from the water; and the church on a neighbouring height, is a very pretty object. Here, the county of Kerry ends, and Limerick county begins.

On the Clare side, the river now forms a wide bay, called Labeshida Bay; and the banks, both on the Clare and Limerick side, exhibit the same features, until we reach Loghill. It is, I believe, on this part of the Shannon, that the real incidents which gave rise to the excellent novel, called "The Collegians," took place; and that the real Elie O'Connor was betrayed and drowned. On

both sides, the banks of the Shannon are beautiful beyond Loghill. On the Limerick side, situated on a green eminence near to the river, is Mount Trenchard, the seat of Mr. Spring Rice; and opposite, on the Clare side, the beautiful domain of Cahircon, with its deep bay, and mansion buried among woods.

Soon after passing Mount Trenchard we reached Foynes Island, the property of Lord Dunraven; and immediately afterwards, Achnish Island, which, however, is not an island, unless in extraordinarily high tides. These are both on the Limerick side of the river, which now, on the other side, expands into the fine estuary, which reaches far into the county of Clare, and is studded with grassy islands of the most beautiful greenness, covered with innumerable cattle. The view was here most captivating. The deep woods of Cahircon and Mount Trenchard were behind; the green islands and more distant hills of Clare, on one side, with the estuary of the river Fergus stretching far to the left; while on the Limerick side, a recess in the banks shewed, at a little distance, the town and castle of Askeaton; and at a greater distance, "the

Hill of Truth," so celebrated throughout this part of the country, as the resort of the fairies, or "good people." The view of this hill, gave rise to some conversation touching the good people; and the man at the helm, entertained his auditors with many stories of fairies,—in the existence of whom, he evidently entertained the firmest belief.

The river, after we passed the estuary of the Fergus, suddenly contracts to about a mile and a half wide; and Begh Castle, an old black ruin, and near to it, the domain of Castletown, and still farther, the fine ruin, called Carrig-aguinal Castle, situated on a bold rock, present themselves successively. These are all on the Limerick side; but on the side of Clare, the objects of attraction are still finer,—particularly Bunratty Castle; which, together with a new mansion, lies in a deep recess, surrounded by wood, and with fine green slopes behind.

All the remainder of the distance to Limerick, the views are full of beauty. High, sloping, and finely cultivated hills, a little back from the river; with handsome houses, and more than one old ruin nearer to the banks, are seen on the Clare side;

while Cooper Hill, and Tervac, two fine domains, lie embosomed in wood on the other bank. The river has now gradually contracted; and the two last of its reaches, up to Limerick, are not more than from a quarter to three quarters of a mile in breadth. Limerick is not seen, until the last reach of the river be entered; and owing to the absence of spires and architectural eminences, the city does not shew to great advantage.

My object being to reach Ennis, the county town of Clare, about twenty-six miles from Limerick, I did little more than step out of the steam vessel, and into a car; and at present, therefore, I shall say nothing of the city, until my return from Ennis.

The first part of the road to Ennis, embraces nearly the same views as the voyage up the Shannon; for the road runs parallel to, though at a little distance from, the river. From several of the eminences over which I passed, a great part of the course of the lower Shannon is laid open; and the country on either side of the road was green, fertile, and beautiful. Several of the ruins which are seen from the river,—particularly Bunratty

Castle,—I passed close by; and several fine domains,—among others, that belonging to Sir Edward O'Brien, lay in our way.

The little town of Clare, which, from its situation ought to be the county town, in place of Ennis, lies between Limerick and Ennis, and only about two miles from the latter. There is a fine navigation up the estuary of the river Fergus, to the bridge of Clare; so that Clare is the export point of the Ennis market. A very trifling expenditure would extend the water communication to Ennis; and there is no doubt, that, in that event, the prosperity of the town would rapidly increase; for Clare is not only a fine corn country, but an extensive cattle breeding country. The proposal of a canal, however, has met with every opposition from narrow-mindedness and jobbing. The great Ennis proprietor likes nothing that costs anything; and the proprietor of Clare is not of course anxious to remove the point of export from Clare to Ennis. Notwithstanding the advantages possessed by Clare, the place looks poverty-stricken.

I reached Ennis just as it fell dark; and found the town in all the bustle that in an Irish county

town, precedes the holding of assizes: the inns were all choke full; and for lodgings, the most exorbitant prices were demanded. From three to eight guineas, for a few days, were asked for two rooms; and I was glad to find a place to creep into, even on these terms. Although the assize was opened on the following day, no business was entered upon, until the day after; and I therefore employed the interval in those perambulations, scrutinies, and inquiries, which occupy a part of my attention in every town.

I had not yet seen, in Ireland, any town with suburbs so extensive, in comparison with the town itself; or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say, that I had not seen any town with so few good streets, in comparison with the bad; for the rows and streets of cabins form, in fact, the greater part of the town, and cannot properly be called suburbs. There is not, indeed, one good street in Ennis; and there are only two streets which rise above the rank of lanes. Ennis, however, is a populous town, containing 12,000 inhabitants; and is susceptible of considerable improvement in many ways, but especially by the construction of some communication with the river navigation at Clare.

The retail trade in Ennis is not extensive, excepting in the necessaries of life. Limerick is so near, and the communication with it so frequent and so easy, that it absorbs a great part of the retail trade of the county of Clare.

I have nowhere yet found land let dearer, or its small occupiers in a poorer condition, than in the neighbourhood of Ennis. I found average good land, but by no means first rate land, situated about a mile from the town, let at 7*l.* and 8*l.* per acre; and very indifferent land, as far and even at a greater distance from the town, let at 4*l.* and 5*l.* per acre. This is literally squeezing the uttermost farthing out of the soil; and the proprietor of a large portion of the land in this neighbourhood, a Mr. Gore, is one of those short-sighted individuals, whose object is, to keep up a nominal rent roll, and to let his land to the highest bidder. This gentleman takes no warning by the frequency of unpaid rents, and possessions relinquished; and finds no difficulty, in the present state of the country, when the demand for improved land is greater than the supply, of letting his land at whatever price he chooses to put upon it. The miserable suburbs of

Ennis afford evidence of the same system. I need scarcely add, that there is great want of employment in and about Ennis; and that nothing is done in the way of providing it.

The country about Ennis offers many beautiful scenes. I would particularly name Eden vale and Eden lake,—spots of great loveliness and repose. But the neighbourhood of such charming scenes as these, too often remind one of Castle Rack-rent—a large neglected looking mansion, and a pack of hounds; and congregations of miserable cabins scattered around. Clare is a backward county; little has been done for it; and in no county, has grand jury jobbing been more unblushingly carried on.

CHAPTER XII.

Clare Assizes—English and Irish Assizes—Description of Cases tried—*Fair* Murders—Spirit of Faction—Difficulty of eliciting Truth—Disregard of an Oath—Extent to which Faction is carried—A paid Magistracy necessary—Rape Cases—Abduction—Murder—Assaults—Kissing the Book—Superstitions—General Impressions from attending an Irish Assize.

A small Irish county town, during assizes, presents a spectacle that is never seen in England; for even supposing the calendar to be as long, in an English as in an Irish county,—which it never is,—the difference in the character of the cases to be tried, materially affects the aspect of the town and its population. In England, a case of murder or man-slaughter, brings to the county town only the near relations of the party to be tried,—and perhaps, of the party prosecuting; but in Ireland, things are on a different scale. The English murder is a private act, perpetrated by some

ruffian for the sake of gain: the Irish homicide has been committed for no reason at all; and not by one cold-blooded ruffian, but by a crowd of demi-barbarians, who meet for the purpose of fighting; and who have no other reason for fighting, than because one half of the number are called O'Sullivan, and the other O' something else; so that when a manslaughter is to be prosecuted at an Irish assize, the case does not bring up merely the accused and his one or two witnesses, but it brings half the "boys" in the county who bear the same name as the accused; and as many more, of the same name as the man who was killed,—every one of the former, ready to kiss the book, and swear, that the boy accused of the homicide, never handled a shillelah, or lifted a stone, or was seen in a "scrimmage" in his days; and every one of the latter as ready to swear, that the boy that was killed, was the most peaceable boy that ever bore his name, and that he was killed for no reason at all. Besides these homicide cases, which are peculiar to an Irish assize, prosecutions of any kind bring together a greater number of persons than in England,—for be it a robbery, or a rape, or any other crime, of

which a man is accused, all his relations come forward to swear an alibi. It may be easily conceived, therefore, what a motley crowd fills the streets of an Irish county town at the time of an assize.

Nor is it only the number of persons, but their eagerness also, that strikes a stranger. Besides the groups that throng every part of the open streets, and who are always in earnest talk, dense crowds are collected at the door of every attorney's office, and no one of this brotherhood can walk a yard, without having his sleeve pulled by half-a-dozen "boys" or women, all interested for or against somebody; and intreating his honour to get them justice: which may mean, either to get a man hanged, or to save a man from hanging.

The most numerous class of cases at most Irish assizes, is that which is facetiously denominated *fair* murders; that is, homicides committed at fairs; and I do not know any means, by which so much insight is to be obtained into the character of the Irish peasantry, and into the condition of the country, and state of things among the lower classes of society, as by listening to these prosecutions for *fair* murders. There were many of these

prosecutions at the Ennis assizes; and, although I had already heard much of the factions, into which the peasantry are divided, I had no conception of the extent of this evil, nor of the bitterness with which this spirit of faction is attended. However these factions may have originated, there is now no distinction among their adherents, excepting that which arises from the possession of a different name. The O'Sullivans are as distinct a people from the O'Neils, as the Dutch from the Belgians. The factions have chiefs, who possess authority. Regular agreements are made to have a battle; the time agreed upon is generally when a fair takes place; and, at these fights, there is regular marshalling, and "wheeling;" and, as for its being a crime to break a "boy's" head, such an idea never enters the brain of any one.

The spirit of faction is brought into court by almost every witness in these prosecutions. I saw a witness, a woman, brought in support of the prosecution for a homicide committed on some cousin,—who, on being desired to identify the prisoners, and the court-keeper's long rod being put into her hand, that she might point them out, struck

each of them a smart blow on the head. As for finding out the truth, by the mere evidence of the witnesses, it is generally impossible. Almost all worth knowing, is elicited on the cross-examination; and it is always, by the appearance and manner of the witness, more than by his words, that the truth is to be gathered. All the witnesses, examined for the prosecution, were, by their own account, mere lookers-on at the battle; nor stick, nor stone had they. *Their* party had no mind to fight that day; but, in making this assertion, they always take care to let it be known, that, if they had had a mind to fight, they could have handled their shillelahs to some purpose. On the other hand, all the witnesses for the prisoner aver just the same of themselves; so that it is more by what witnesses wont tell, than by what they do tell, that truth is discovered. Half the witnesses called, on both sides, have broken heads; and it is not unfrequently by a comparison of the injuries received on both sides, and by the evidence of the doctor, that one is helped to the truth.

It will be easily seen, from what I have said, that I found ample confirmation of what I had often

heard,—the small regard for veracity among the Irish peasantry, and their general disregard of an oath. To save a relation from punishment, or to punish any one who has injured a relation, an Irish peasant will swear anything. This would be called, by some, hatred of the law; but, although, in swearing falsely, the Irish peasant wishes to defeat the ends of justice, he does not do so, merely because he hates justice and the law, but because he thinks he is bound to save his relation, or any one of his faction. If the name of the man who was killed be O'Grady, then every witness, who comes up to be sworn for the prosecution, is also an O'Grady; or, if they be women, they were O'Gradys before they were married: and, if the name of the prisoner be O'Neil, then all the witnesses, for the defence, are O'Neils; or, if there be any exceptions in name, still there is a relationship of some kind.

The factions, which occasion the atrocities of which we, in England, know very little, (for the cases reported from the Irish assizes, in the English papers, are, generally, cases in some degree political, and are seldom, or ever, the homicides arising

out of fights at fairs), have never been energetically met by the law and the magistracy. Some years ago, when trading magistrates were common, their non-interference was purchased by services performed. If a magistrate, living in the vicinity of a place where two great factions wished to try their strength, had a meadow ready for mowing—or a a field of wheat, ripe for the sickle—or wished to lay in his winter's turf—twenty or thirty men, of both factions, would volunteer their labour, and refuse, not only pecuniary recompense, but refreshment even: the fight was suffered to go on; and the breakers of heads were leniently dealt with. These days, I believe, are passed, or fast passing; but there is still far too little energy shewn in putting down faction. It is true, that in many remote places—and it is often in the remotest spots that these encounters take place—there are no military, and few policemen; but a resident magistrate, if he be a man fit for his office, may always be previously informed upon these matters. He knows that a faction exists in his neighbourhood; he knows that the fair is drawing near; he knows, that at every fair, a fight takes place; and where

any agreement has been made to fight out the quarrel at the fair, he may, without any difficulty, obtain the most accurate information; and every one knows how easily a mob, especially an Irish mob, is reduced to obedience by a very trifling display of firmness and force. I look upon it as most essential to the prosperity of Ireland, that these factions should be put down. They are nearly as inimical to the investment of capital, and nearly as much encouragers of absenteeism, as many of those other kinds of agitation, which are more familiar to us: and I will again take the liberty of repeating my belief, that the substitution of a stipendiary, for an unpaid magistracy, is essential to the peace of Ireland. It is quite unreasonable to expect that an unpaid magistracy, situated as that magistracy is in Ireland, should do their duty. But, to return to the Ennis assizes.

The most numerous class of cases (with one exception), and the most important class, as throwing the greatest light on the character and state of the people, were those homicides of which I have spoken. The exception in point of number of cases, is rape: of these cases, I think nearly

forty were entered for trial; but only a very few of that number were heard; and all of them terminated in acquittal. In nine cases out of ten, the crime is sworn to, merely for the purpose of getting a husband; and the plan generally succeeds. The parties are married before the cause is called for trial; and I have myself seen an earnest negotiation carried on under the piazzas of the court-house, a little while before a case was called. There was the "boy" indicted for a capital crime, but out on bail, as he generally is; and the girl, about to swear away a man's life; and the attorneys, and a large circle of relations, all trying to bring about a marriage, before Pat should be called upon to appear, and answer to the indictment that he, "not having the fear of God before his eyes, and being instigated by the devil," did so and so. In the case to which I was a listener, Pat and the fair one could not agree: the trial went on; and Pat was acquitted.

The number, and nature of these cases, certainly indicate no very high state of morals; for in every one of them, circumstances have occurred,

which afford to the prosecutrix *some* ground of charge; and the amicable termination of these cases, shews how small the ground of the *capital* charge is. In these cases too, the want of veracity is strongly displayed; and it certainly impresses a stranger with no very favourable idea of female character, to find a girl falsely swearing a capital charge against a man whom she is willing at that moment to marry.

I saw tried, one of those singular cases of abduction, which very frequently occur in Ireland; and which also throw considerable light on the state of society among the lower ranks. Sham cases of abduction are frequent. The "boy" and the girl are agreed; but the girl's relations being dissentient, owing to her being an heiress, and entitled to a better match, it is made up between the young people, that the girl shall be carried away by apparent force. The youth makes known the case to his friends, and collects a number of associates: they come during the night to the house of the girl, force open the door, seize upon the maid, who, though "nothing loth," screams, and makes all the opposition in her power,

place her on horseback, and, after escorting her a sufficient distance, deliver her over to the "boy," on whose account the abduction was got up. The charge of abduction which I saw tried at Ennis, was a real abduction however, and a very shameless one, attended with circumstances of great cruelty; and originating, as indeed they always do, in love of money. These abductions are most detrimental to the peace of the country; because a feud is instantly generated, between the relatives of the girl, and those of the aggressor; and many subsequent fights invariably result from these outrages.

One of the cases tried at the Ennis assizes, was in many respects similar to that celebrated case which was the foundation of that excellent novel, "The Collegians." A man was tried for the murder of a girl whom he had seduced; he killed her, and buried her in a peat-rick; and the similarity is the stronger, inasmuch as he was at the time, in treaty to marry another, not so high-born a damsel indeed, as Anne Chute; but high enough, and rich enough, to induce him to sacrifice *his* Elie O'Connor. In this case, one of the

witnesses, on being desired to identify the prisoner, and being asked the question, "Is that the man?" turned round, and recognizing the prisoner, said, "That's him," and added, "How are you Paddy?" nodding familiarly and good-humouredly to the accused. The man was convicted, and hanged.

Another case tried, arose out of one of those disputes, which so frequently originate in the possession of, and competition for, land. It was a case wherein a widow paid an enormous rent for a bit of potato land; and the rent not being paid, and the mischievous power of distraining being resorted to, the possessor endeavoured to save some portion of the potatos. This gave rise to a fight; and the fight occasioned manslaughter. In this case, there was much false swearing, and much difficulty in arriving at the truth; and the case strongly impressed upon me the conviction, that the power of distraining, in the hands of the lower orders, is a most mischievous power.

I noticed, that great importance is attached to kissing the book; and sometimes, this ceremony is required, for greater security, to be performed

two or three times. Without kissing the book, a witness looks upon his oath as very imperfectly taken; and it is necessary that in the act of kissing, the witness be narrowly watched, lest he kiss his own thumb—with which he holds the book—in place of the book itself.

I noticed also, in the examination of one of the witnesses, a proof of the prevailing belief in the "good people," or fairies. A witness, being asked upon his oath, whether a certain individual could have made his way out of a room, the door and windows of which had been fastened, said, with the utmost gravity, it was impossible he could have got out, unless by enchantment; meaning by this, without the assistance of the good people.

To attend an Irish assize, is certainly not the means by which a stranger is likely to obtain favourable impressions of Irish character. Few of its favourable traits are exhibited there; while all the darker shades are made but too manifest. Want of veracity, on the most solemn occasion on which veracity is ever called for, is but too plainly established. We find the very reverse of that straightforwardness, which it is so delightful to see exhibited

in the examination of a witness. If positive falsehood will serve the end, it is unhesitatingly resorted to; and as for telling the *whole* truth, I saw no one instance of it.

But the most striking defect of character which is brought to light, is a perfect contempt of human suffering, and an utter disregard even of the value of human life. Weapons, of the most deadly description are brought into court as evidence,—sticks and whips loaded with lead; and stones, that might crush the head of a horse. A ruffian may occasionally be found in England, who would flay a man alive to become possessed of his purse; but I greatly question, whether out of Ireland, fifty men could be found in any one parish, in any country in Europe, ready to beat one another's brains out with sticks and stones, and all but glorying in the deed. And, as I have already observed, the same ferocity which has been exhibited at the fight, is brought into court: false oaths are the substitutes for weapons; and by these, witnesses seek to avenge the death of a relative who has been more unfortunate, but probably not more criminal than the accused.

I was much struck at Ennis, as I had been at Tralee, with the acuteness and talent of the Irish attorneys. Their cross-examinations of witnesses were admirable; certainly not surpassed by the very best cross-examinations I ever heard from the mouth of an English barrister.

A day or two before the conclusion of the Clare assizes, I left Ennis for Limerick; returning by a road different from that by which I had gone to Ennis, and through an equally interesting and fertile country.

CHAPTER XIII.

Return to Limerick—The New and Old Towns—Present State of the Trade of Limerick—Prosperity—Projected Improvements—Mr. Spring Rice—Public Institutions—The Lunatic Asylum—The Barrington Hospital—Antiquities—Condition of the Destitute Poor, and unemployed Artizans of Limerick—Minute Details—Poor Laws—a *Mont de Pieté*—Loan Fund—Environs of Limerick—Land and Rents—Embarkments on the Shannon—The Village of Adair—Curragh, and Dunraven.

I know of no town in which so distinct a line is drawn between its good and its bad quarters, as in Limerick. A person arriving in Limerick by one of the best approaches, and driving to an hotel in George Street, will probably say, "What a very handsome city this is!" while, on the other hand, a person entering the city by the old town, and taking up his quarters there—a thing, indeed, not likely to happen—would infallibly set down Limerick as the very vilest town he had ever entered.

The new town of Limerick is, unquestionably, superior to anything out of Dublin. Its principal street, although less picturesque than the chief streets of Cork, would generally be reckoned a finer street. It is straight, regular, and modern-looking; and contains abundance of good private houses and of excellent shops; and although there is less the appearance of business in Limerick than in Cork, and fewer evidences of affluence in its neighbourhood; yet, in the more modern aspect of every thing, there are more certain proofs of improvement in the former city. The new town of Limerick is, indeed, of recent origin; and the various indications of prosperity which Limerick presents, are all of them true indications.

The advance of the prosperity of Limerick, has been rapid and uniform. The amount of exports has nearly doubled since the year 1822. Nor has this increase been in only one branch of trade. With very few exceptions it has attended every branch. The corn export trade, especially, has advanced. In 1822, the export of wheat was 102,593 barrels; in 1828, the export had increased to 150,583 barrels; in 1832, the quantity exported

was 194,144 barrels; and in 1833, 218,915. In barley, the export has never been great; and although it has doubled since the year 1824, it has somewhat decreased during the two last years. In oats, the increase has been very great. From 155,000 barrels, exported in 1822, the quantity had risen, in 1832, to 408,000. In flour and oatmeal, too, the increase of export has been steady and great. Of the former article, 172 cwt. only was exported in 1824. In 1828, the quantity had risen to upwards of 6,000 cwt.; in 1832, it was 33,000 cwt.; and in 1833, upwards of 37,000. In oatmeal, the advance has been equally great. The butter trade, which I have found rather declining in most other places, exhibits no symptom of decline in Limerick. In 1822, 42,869 firkins were exported; in 1831, 67,699 firkins were exported; the following year, there was an advance upon this quantity; and in 1833, 75,000 firkins were exported. In many other articles of trade, the increase has been equally great; but the general increase of trade, is best observed by the estimated value of the whole exports. In 1822,

the estimated value was 479,538*l.*; in 1830, the estimated value was 720,266*l.*; the following year, it was 854,406*l.*; in 1832, it was 1,005,945*l.*; and in 1833, 936,995*l.* The tonnage of vessels clearing out of the port, exhibits the same advance. In 1822, the tonnage was 29,876; in 1825, 41,871; in 1831, 52,326; in 1833, 56,850.

From these data, I think I may venture to pronounce Limerick to be at this moment an advancing city; and if certain improvements, now in contemplation, be carried into effect, there is little reason to doubt, that the progress of Limerick will be even more rapid than it has hitherto been. The improvement to which I particularly allude is, the construction of a dock, by which the great drawback on the trade of Limerick—want of floating depth of water at low tide—will be obviated. The plan proposed, is a bold one: it is, to throw a dam completely across the river, at some distance below the town; so that vessels of 500 or 600 tons will be enabled to come up the river, and find a dock with from 20 to 24 feet of water.

This is not the only improvement that is in

progress in Limerick. A handsome new bridge across the Shannon is nearly completed; and a fine square is laid down, railed round, and planted, though not yet built upon. The centre of this square is adorned with a fluted pillar, surmounted by a statue of Mr. Spring Rice,—an honour well merited by that gentleman; — for to his public spiritedness and exertions, the city of Limerick is mainly indebted for every improvement that has either been completed, or that is now in progress.

The public institutions of Limerick are on a fine scale, and some of them, under excellent management. Among the most interesting of these, the Lunatic Asylum may be mentioned. It is, indeed, a pattern for all such institutions. I have never anywhere seen a better example of what may be accomplished by proper management. The building, in its exterior, might be the residence of a nobleman; its interior would put to shame the best scrubbed parlour of Rotterdam; and, in viewing its inmates, madness appears divested of half its horrors. When I visited this institution, it contained 204 persons, only four of whom were that day under coercion.

The county gaol is also reputed to be one of the most approved prisons in the kingdom. I did not visit it; but I believe it is conducted on the same system as the Cork county gaol, of which I have already spoken.

There are several institutions in Limerick, for the alleviation of man's bodily sufferings; and amongst these, I would particularly mention "Barrington's Hospital;" not only because it is one of the best conducted; but also, that I may have an opportunity of mentioning,—as it deserves to be mentioned,—the name of a family to whom the poor of Limerick are so deeply indebted. This hospital was built, and presented to the city, by the family of Sir Joseph Barrington; and as some evidence of the extensive benefit conferred on the city by this institution, I may mention, that no fewer than 14,000 persons were relieved at the dispensary attached to the hospital, during the last six months. Important additions to this hospital are at present contemplated by Mr. M. Barrington, who seems resolved not to stint his beneficence, but is willing rather, that the capabilities of the institution shall keep pace with the wants of the

city. Hospitals are frequently endowed with the wealth which the rich cannot carry into the grave with them; but to found an hospital during a man's lifetime, is an act that deserves to be recorded, and remembered.

I visited, in Limerick, an extensive school for females, which is assisted by the new education board. I found about four hundred children, receiving a useful education,—able, in general, to write well; perfectly instructed in reading; and exhibiting, in their appearance and behaviour, the utmost order and neatness. This school is situated in the old town; which contains other objects to interest a stranger. Thomond-bridge is among the most curious of the ancient monuments of Limerick. The irregularity and rude antiquity of its structure, are equally curious to the antiquarian, and striking to the lover of the picturesque. The bridge is supposed to have been built about the year 1210; it is perfectly level, and is built upon fourteen arches.

Another interesting monument, is the cathedral, a large shapeless pile, with a handsome interior; and with a tower, which every stranger ought to ascend; for there is no elevation adjacent to

Limerick, from which any satisfactory view of the city can be obtained; and from this tower, not only the city, but a large portion of the counties of Limerick and Clare, is laid open; and the tortuous course of the noble Shannon is made intelligible. Unless there be a considerable eminence contiguous to a town, the readiest way of becoming acquainted with its situation, form, and extent, is to climb the steps of the highest church tower. I never omit to do this.

To the antiquarian, there are many interesting vestiges in the old towns of Limerick. The Limerick reader will understand why I say towns; to the English reader, it requires to be told, that there is an English and an Irish town. Remnants of walls, and isolated bastions, are here and there discovered; and the stone, on which the treaty of Limerick was signed, is pointed out to the stranger.

But there are objects of a far different nature, in the old towns of Limerick;—objects of a deeper, and more melancholy interest. The reader will recollect, that in Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny, and in other towns which I have visited, I have made it a part of my duty to inquire into the condition of the poor; and having been informed by those upon

whom I thought some reliance was to be placed, that I should find more and deeper destitution in Limerick, than in any place which I had yet visited, my inquiries in Limerick were prosecuted with all the care which I was capable of bestowing; and I regret to say, that I found too dreadful confirmation of the very worst reports. I spent a day in visiting those parts of the city, where the greatest destitution and misery were said to exist. I entered upwards of forty of the abodes of poverty; and to the latest hour of my existence, I can never forget the scenes of utter and hopeless wretchedness that presented themselves that day. I shall endeavour to convey to the reader some general idea of what I saw.

Some of the abodes I visited were garrets, some were cellars; some were hovels on the ground-floor, situated in narrow yards, or alleys. I will not speak of the filth of the places; *that* could not be exceeded, in places meant to be its receptacles. Let the worst be imagined, and it will not be beyond the truth. In at least three-fourths of the hovels which I entered, there was no furniture of any description, save an iron pot,—no table, no

chair, no bench, no bedstead;—two, three, or four little bundles of straw, with, perhaps, one or two scanty and ragged mats, were rolled up in the corners, unless where these beds were found occupied. The inmates, were some of them old, crooked, and diseased; some younger, but emaciated, and surrounded by starving children; some were sitting on the damp ground, some standing, and many were unable to rise from their little straw heaps. In scarcely one hovel, could I find even a potato. In one which I entered, I noticed a small opening leading into an inner room. I lighted a bit of paper, at the embers of a turf which lay in the chimney, and looked in. It was a cellar wholly dark; and about twelve feet square: two bundles of straw lay in two corners; on one, sat a bed-ridden woman; on another, lay two naked children,—literally naked, with a torn rag of some kind thrown over them both. But I saw worse even than this. In a cellar which I entered, and which was almost quite dark, and slippery with damp, I found a man sitting on a little sawdust. He was naked: he had not even a shirt: a filthy and ragged mat was round

him: this man was a living skeleton; the bones all but protruded through the skin: he was literally starving.

In place of forty hovels, I might have visited hundreds. In place of seeing, as I did, hundreds of men, women, and children, in the last state of destitution, I might have seen thousands. I entered the alleys, and visited the hovels, and climbed the stairs at a venture; I did not select; and I have no reason to believe that the forty which I visited, were the abodes of greater wretchedness than the hundreds which I passed by.

I saw also, another kind of destitution. The individuals I have yet spoken of, were aged, infirm, or diseased: but there was another class, fast approaching infirmity and disease; but yet able and willing to earn their subsistence. I found many hand-loom weavers, who worked from five in the morning till eight at night, and received from a task-master, from half a crown to four shillings a week. Many of these men had wives and families; and I need scarcely say, that confinement, labour, scanty subsistence, and despair, were fast reducing these men to the condition of the others,

upon whom disease, and utter destitution had already laid their hands. The subsistence of these men consisted of one scanty meal of dry potatos daily.

I will only add one other instance of destitution. Driving in the neighbourhood of Limerick, on the Adair road, in company with a medical gentleman, the apparition of a man suddenly appeared by the side of our car. The gentleman who accompanied me knew him: he had been a stone-breaker; but had become infirm, and at length utterly disabled, by disease, from labour: his cabin was close by; and we ascertained, that he, and his family, had subsisted, during the last three days, on the leaves of that yellow-flowered weed which grows among the corn; and which is boiled, and eaten with a little salt. I think I have already mentioned the use of this weed for a similar purpose, by the destitute poor of Kilkenny; or if I have not, I ought to have done so.

I think it is impossible for me to select a better opportunity than this, to advert briefly to a topic, on which I have not hitherto offered any direct observations. I allude to the disputed question, whether there be, or be not, a necessity for some

legal provision for the poor: and I confess, that with such scenes before me as I have at this moment, it does seem to me an insult to humanity and common sense, to doubt the necessity to which I allude. I might carry the reader back with me, to gather arguments from Kilkenny, Waterford, Cashel; and, indeed, from almost every town, village, and hamlet, that has lain on my way; but the situation of the poor of Limerick is at this moment fresh in my memory; and I ask any man of ordinary intelligence, whether such a state of things can, or ought to be allowed to continue? Why should Lord Limerick, in Ireland, be exempt from the duty which Lord Limerick, in England, must perform? Why, under the same government, should men be allowed to starve in one division of the empire, and not in another? I mention the name of Lord Limerick, not because I suppose he, or any other man, can prevent pauperism on his city property; but because, when I inquire who are the individuals that contribute to keep the bodies and souls of these miserable creatures together, and when I ascertain, that many a humane citizen contributes more than the noble

owner of all the property, then I perceive, that there is something wrong; and,—that leaving for a moment the question, as it relates to the poor, out of consideration,—justice demands, that in the ratio of their abundance, men should be forced to contribute.

At present, I shall not pursue the subject farther. But in a future chapter, when I shall have seen every part of Ireland, I shall speak at greater length, and with more confidence. This I mean to do, with reference to a Poor Law Commission, which was prosecuting its inquiries while I was in Ireland. By the kindness of friends, I was furnished with all the papers which government intended should guide the inquiries of the commissioners: and when I shall have travelled over every part of Ireland, I shall probably feel myself competent to furnish some answer to the queries which are contained in the instructions alluded to; and possibly, to present my own report.

A prospectus for establishing, in this city, a *Mont de Pieté*, or charitable pawn-office, fell into my hands. The project originated with Mr. Barrington; and, certainly, from the statements made

in the prospectus to which I allude, any substitute for the common pawn-broking system ought to meet with encouragement. The rate of interest, 30 per cent., sanctioned by government, is increased to a ruinous degree, by the necessity of redeeming and repawning weekly, in place of monthly. One shilling lent, and received in the week, pays 1*d.* interest, and 1*d.* for the duplicate: this is 8*s.* 8*d.* interest on one shilling, for a year; or 8*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* on a pound, for a year; or 886*l.* 13s. 4, per cent., per annum; and this, exclusive of compound interest. The prospectus, after setting forth the wrongs suffered by the necessitous, under the present system, proposes that the profits of the establishment, after paying expenses, shall be applied, in the first instance, in payment of the interest of the capital lent, at 5 per cent., and that the surplus profits shall be divided into equal shares; one, in paying off the debentures; and the other (and when the debentures are paid, the whole) in maintaining and extending the benefits of the hospital. I have dwelt the longer upon this matter, from the belief which I entertain, that the miserable condition of the poor of Ireland is made

greatly more miserable, by the extortionate system of common pawn-broking; and that an important relief would be afforded to the poor, by the establishment, wherever practicable, of a *Mont de Pieté*, to which the needy man may go with confidence—secure against usurious exaction—knowing that he will receive the fair value on the article deposited; that no advantage will be taken of his ignorance or necessity; and that he is, at the same time, obtaining relief for the present, and contributing to a fund which will comfort and relieve him in the hour of distress. I sincerely trust Mr. Barrington may be successful in his attempt, and that the benefits to the poor of Limerick, which would infallibly follow, may lead to similar institutions elsewhere.

There is in Limerick, as in Cork, and several other places, a loan fund, the residue of subscriptions for the distressed Irish, which was apportioned by the London Committee, in 1822, to different counties, for the promotion of industry. I have a statement, now before me, of the present condition of this fund; and it will surprise the reader to be told, that, while the sum put at the disposal of the

county of Limerick has increased, by judicious management, since the year 1822, from 6370*l.* to 7521*l.*, and, in other counties, in greater or less proportion, — in some counties it has remained stationary, or suffered a decrease. In Clare, the 6000*l.* intended to be applied to the benefit of the industrious, by loan, at a small interest, and on proper security, has become 5989*l.* In Sligo, the 3870*l.* has become 3831*l.* In Leitrim there has been on the original 2000*l.* a decrease of no less than 867*l.*; and perhaps the most singular fact of all is, that the 2500*l.* allocated to Tipperary is, at this moment, precisely 2500*l.* There must have been somewhere gross mismanagement, or grosser jobbing. Where has the 2500*l.* been since 1822? It can never have been applied as intended, because a single loan made, must have either added to, or taken from it: it cannot have lain in a bank, because interest would have accrued upon it! From all that I could ascertain, both in Cork and in Limerick, I have reason to think that this loan fund has been most beneficial in its effects; and that any loan fund, under judicious management,

must produce important results, in encouraging industry, and accumulating capital.

I have said nothing, as yet, of the environs of Limerick. In the neighbourhood of such a river as the Shannon, they can scarcely be otherwise than beautiful; and the great natural fertility of the soil, and the improved husbandry, pretty generally adopted, greatly increase the attractions of this fine district. The Marquis of Lansdowne possesses an extensive estate close to Limerick. It is in the finest state of cultivation; and, from a personal survey, I may state that every industrious tenant is in comfortable circumstances; and that the moderate rent charged for the excellent land in this neighbourhood, was in striking contrast with the rents paid for the comparatively indifferent land, which I had lately seen in the neighbourhood of Ennis.

I cannot speak so well of the property of the Earl of Limerick. Whatever advantages the tenantry possess, are referable to the exertions and good-heartedness of his lordship's agents. I will not trust myself to speak further of the Earl of

Limerick, unless only to add, that from high and low, rich and poor, I never heard a good word o his lordship.

Some extensive embankments are now in course of being constructed below Limerick, with the view of reclaiming land. One of these, the lowest down the river, is undertaken by a Scotch gentleman, who has already sunk a large sum in the attempt: the others are undertaken by Lord Lansdowne and by Mr. Barrington; and there is no doubt of the ultimate success of all these attempts.

Before leaving Limerick, I visited the beautiful village of Adair, and the fine domains of the Earl of Dunraven, and of Sir Aubrey de Vere.

This was one of the most agreeable days I have spent. I took a circuitous road, skirting the left bank of the Shannon, and visiting a village, called Palace, on my way, that I might have the pleasure of looking in upon the talented author of "The Collegians." Carragh, the domain of Sir Aubrey de Vere, I greatly admire. Sir Aubrey, being then engaged as foreman of the Grand Jury at Limerick, I had not an opportunity of presenting my letter of introduction. It is only when I do

not, or have not an opportunity of presenting my letters of introduction, that I mention them at all; and this, not as information to the public, to whom the matter is of no importance; but, for the information of the individuals who gave me the letters, and of the individuals to whom they were addressed, who may possibly be aware of my having been in possession of such letters; and who, without some mention of them, would be ignorant of the reason why they were not used.

Adair, and the domain of the Earl of Dunraven (to whom I also carried a letter, which I did not deliver), are both beautiful. Within Lord Dunraven's domain are no fewer than three ruins of abbeys,—one of them, the Black Abbey, yet in tolerable preservation. There is also, close to the picturesque bridge over the Maize, the ruins of the castle of the Earls of Desmond. The Earl of Dunraven is now building a new castellated mansion, close to the old house: with Kingston Castle in my recollection, it appeared rather diminutive; but the surrounding scenery is close scenery, and not suitable to a very commanding edifice.

CHAPTER XIV.

Ascent of the Shannon from Limerick to Athlone—Castle Connell—The Rapids—Holy Well—The River above Castle Connell—Killaloe—The Steam Navigation Company—Voyage up Loch Derg to Portumna—Character of this expansion of the Shannon—Details of the Ascent—Portumna—The River and its Banks between Portumna and Banagher—Comparison with other Rivers—Desolate Scenes—Banagher—Journey to Athlone.

River of billows! to whose mighty heart
The tide-wave rushes of the Atlantic sea;
River of quiet depths! by cultured lea,
Romantic wood, or city's crowded mart;
River of old poetic founts! that start
From their lone mountain cradles, wild and free,
Nursed with the Fawns, lulled by the wood-lark's glee,
And cushal's hymeneal song apart—
River of chieftains! whose baronial halls,
Like veteran warriors, watch each wave-worn steep,
Portumna's towers, Bunratty's regal walls,
Carrick's stern rock, the Geraldine's grey keep—
River of dark mementos!

I now return to the Shannon; from which, the city of Limerick, and its attractions, and interests, have some time diverted me.

It is impossible to ascend by water, from Limerick to the village of Castle Connell, owing to the rapids which intervene: but the road, although not running close to the river, commands its banks; and carries the traveller through as lovely a country as the imagination can well picture. In variety, and wooded fertility, it is not surpassed by the most celebrated of the English vales, no one of which can boast as an adjunct to its scenery, so noble a river as the Shannon. Many fine seats lie on the left of the road, towards the river, particularly Mount Shannon, the residence, at least the property, of the Earl of Clare; and glimpses are also caught of several other fine domains and villas, amongst others, those belonging to the numerous family of Massey.

On reaching the village of Castle Connell, my first feeling was admiration; my next, surprise, that I should never before have heard of Castle Connell. It is surrounded by every kind of beauty; and after spending a day in its neighbourhood, I began to entertain serious doubts, whether even Killarney itself, greatly surpassed in beauty, the scenery around Castle Connell. It is a little

village of neat, clean, country houses, situated close to the Shannon, and backed and flanked by noble domains, and fine spreading woods. Just below the village, commence the rapids of the Shannon, of which I had never even heard, until I reached Limerick; and these are of themselves well worth a visit. I hired a little boat to shoot the upper rapid, and take me across; for the scenery is best seen from the Clare side; and I was well repaid for my trouble. A charming walk leads down the opposite bank, through Sir Hugh Massey's grounds; and I do not at this moment recollect any example of more attractive river scenery. The wide, deep, clear river is, for more than a quarter of a mile, almost a cataract; and this, to an English eye, must be particularly striking. It is only in the streams and rivulets of England, that rapids are found: the larger rivers, generally glide smoothly on without impediment from rocks: the Thames, Trent, Mersey, and Severn, when they lose the character of streams, and become rivers, hold a noiseless course; but the Shannon, larger than all the four, here pours that immense body of water which above the rapids is forty feet deep,

and three hundred yards wide, through and above a congregation of huge stones and rocks, which extend nearly half a mile; and offers not only an unusual scene, but a spectacle approaching much nearer to the sublime, than any moderate-sized stream can offer even in its highest cascade. None of the Welsh water-falls, nor the Geisbach in Switzerland, can compare for a moment in grandeur and effect with the rapids of the Shannon. *Bor.*

Nor is the river the only attractive object at Castle Connell: its adjuncts are all beautiful. The greenest of lawns rise from it; the finest timber fringes it: magnificent mansions tower above their surrounding woods; swelling knolls are dotted with cattle and sheep; and it so happened too, that the landscape had all the advantage which the alternations of sunshine and shadow could give it.

I went as far as a holy well, dedicated to St. Senanus. Judging from what I saw, it must be in high repute; for hundreds of little wooden vessels lay heaped in and above it, the offerings of those who had come to drink; and the trees that overshadowed the well were entirely covered with shreds of all colours—bits and clippings of gowns,

and handkerchiefs, and petticoats,—remembrances also of those who drank. These, I believe, are the title-deeds to certain exemptions, or benefits, claimed by those who thus deposit them in the keeping of the patron saint, who is supposed to be thus reminded of the individuals whose penances might otherwise have been overlooked. I noticed among the offerings, some strings of beads, and a few locks of hair.

The inn at Castle Connell is beautifully situated, and very moderate in its charges; and the inhabitants of Limerick make abundant use of it: for, besides that Castle Connell is resorted to as summer quarters, it is also a noted rendezvous of the trades-people, on Sundays and holidays. Houses are scarce and dear. For a very small house, 10*l.* a month is asked; and a couple of rooms indifferently furnished, could not be had for less than 25*s.* per week. I found this to be universally the case throughout Ireland at all places of occasional resort; everywhere affording proof of want of enterprise in the employment of capital, however judicious the investment might be.

I hired a small rowing boat to take me up the

river to Killaloe, where the steam navigation of the upper Shannon commences. The rapids of Castle Connell, although they interrupt the river navigation, are not allowed to impede the water communication between the upper Shannon and Limerick,—a canal being cut from the city, to a point in the Shannon, about a mile and a half above Castle Connell.

Leaving Castle Connell, Clare is on one side, and Limerick county on the other side of the river; but the division line between Limerick and Tipperary is soon passed; and then Clare is on the west, and Tipperary on the east side of the river. Nothing could be greener than the sloping banks which we rowed swiftly by; they were adorned too, on the Limerick side especially, by several pretty villas; and this being hay season, the slanting sunshine, falling athwart the after-grass, bathed it in hues that were almost too brilliant to be natural. The river is here, from two to three hundred yards wide, and averages from thirty to forty feet in depth.

About two miles up the river from Castle Connell, we reached O'Brien's bridge; an old bridge, with a

castle, and small village, on the Clare side of the river. The bridge has thirteen arches, and is only interesting from its antiquity. There is a slight fall of water; but not so much as to occasion any difficulty or danger, either in ascending, or in shooting the arch. Beyond O'Brien's bridge, the country improves; fine cultivated hills appear at some little distance from the river; and although a deficiency of wood may be remarked, the views on either side present many sweet pictures of quiet pastoral scenery — verdant slopes, and drowsy cattle, and nodding water lilies, and here and there, a farm-house, and its more animated accompaniments. We also passed several small islands, none of them large enough to be made subservient to utility.

About a mile and a half before reaching Killaloe, another canal cut is requisite, owing to some inconsiderable rapids. The canal skirts the domain of the Lord Bishop of Killaloe; whose palace and grounds are sufficiently inviting: the fine long meadow-grass of the bishop's lawn, reminded me by contrast, of a saying I had heard of the county of Kerry, where grass is so scarce, that it is said,

the cows wont lift up their heads to look at a passer-by, for fear that they should not be able to find the grass again. I reached Killaloe about four hours after leaving Castle Connell.

Killaloe, I found an improving town. This improvement arises from several causes; but chiefly is owing to the spirited proceedings of the Inland Steam Navigation Company,—a company, whose objects are most closely connected with the improvement of Ireland, and which are too important, and too vast, to be left, in the present infancy of the establishment, to private exertion, or even to public patronage. The improvement of the navigation of the Shannon and its tributaries, is deserving of the especial protection and aid of government. Killaloe is the head-quarters of the company; and from this point, there is a regular steam communication for goods and passengers up the Shannon, through Loch Derg, to Portumna, Banagher, and Athlone; and from the same point, by packet boat to Limerick, and thence, again, by steam to the sea. It is intended to carry the steam navigation above Athlone, through Loch Ree, to Lanesborough, Carrick, and Leitrim; and when

these arrangements are completed, there will be a direct navigation on the Shannon, of nearly *two hundred and fifty miles*, mostly performed by steam; together with a direct water communication to Dublin, by the grand canal.

I have ascribed the improving condition of Killaloe, chiefly to the enterprise of the steam navigation company. This arises in several ways,—partly in the direct employment afforded by the company in the construction of buildings, docks, &c.; and partly in the general encouragement offered to trade, by the facilities afforded, both for internal communication, and for export trade, which has lately been greatly on the increase. There are also other sources of employment and wealth in Killaloe. The extensive slate quarries in the neighbourhood, afford a yearly export of at least 100,000 tons; and dispense about 300*l.* weekly, in wages: and close to the town, an extensive mill has lately been erected, for the sawing of marble and stone, which are sent there both from Galway and Limerick counties: so that altogether there is little want of employment in Killaloe.

The town is very agreeably situated on the

rising ground above the river, and within a mile of the noble expansion of water, called Loch Derg. An old bridge of nineteen arches, just below the town, connects the counties of Clare and Tipperary; and there is an old cathedral, with a square tower, and Saxon archway of considerable beauty. I attempted to gain the summit of the tower, by the stair inside; but found it in so ruinous and dangerous a condition, that I was forced to give up the attempt.

I stepped on board the steam vessel at eight in the morning, satisfied with every thing about Killaloe, excepting the inn, which is far from being what might be expected at the place where the navigation company has fixed its head-quarters. About a mile and a half from Killaloe, just at the entrance to Loch Derg, is a mount on the left bank, covered with trees, called O'Brien's fort, where it is said, the ancient kings once resided. On entering Loch Derg, several pretty and interesting objects attract one on both sides. The vessel kept nearly mid-water, and this first reach of the loch being only about a mile wide, there is nothing lost to the eye. Derry Castle, the resi-

dence of Captain Head, on the Tipperary side, is a beautiful spot: the lawn slopes down to the water; the house is almost hidden in fine woods; and there is a fine back-ground of cultivated mountains. On a little island, close to the shore, are seen the ruins of a castle.

All the way through this first reach of the loch, a distance of about four miles, the character of the banks continues the same: not that there is any thing like monotony; all the variety that can be produced by verdure, wood, and tillage is there: but the banks are invariably sloping and cultivated, with higher and more sterile elevations rising behind: ten or twelve islands, of inconsiderable size, lie scattered over this first reach. At the point where this first reach of the loch terminates, opening into the wider part of the lake, the banks on both sides are extremely beautiful. The Clare side is covered with deep woods, backed by lofty hills; and the Tipperary side is adorned by the fine domain of Castle-loch, embosomed in magnificent oak woods: here, too, an island surmounted by a ruin, is seen on the right, close to the shore; and a small harbour has been constructed in a little

bay, for the convenience of the export of slate. This first reach of the loch, varies in depth from thirty up to ninety feet; but in the mid channel, the average depth is from seventy to eighty feet. Close to the shore, there is generally from ten to fifteen feet water; and at some parts, as much as forty feet.

Immediately, on emerging from the first reach, the loch spreads both to the left and right. The left reach, which is not the path of the vessel, is an interesting one. Clare is on one side of it, and county Galway on the other. On the Clare side, the nearer banks are finely cultivated and well wooded; and more than one ruined castle is seen rising from the water's edge. One of these castles was some time ago held in forcible possession by illicit distillers, against all the civil force that attempted, from time to time, to dislodge them; and it was at length found necessary, to batter down the sheltering walls with cannon ball. On the Galway side, the scenery is diversified by several fine country seats, and by the prettily situated village, called Mount Shannon. Several islands, also, adorn this reach; particularly Holy

island,—covered with beautiful green pasturage, on which there is an extensive grazing; and where also, is one of the ancient round towers, besides some lesser and more imperfect ruins. The other islands are no way remarkable. With the exception of Bushy island, which is what it professes to be, they are destitute of wood.

Leaving this reach of which I have just been speaking, to the left, we now turned into the main reach of the loch. The banks are now, for a few miles, less interesting on the Tipperary side; but on the Galway shore, several gentlemen's seats are seen, and a tolerable sprinkling of wood. We made a short halt at a place, formerly called Cow island, now christened Williamstown. Here an hotel is in course of being built; and it is in contemplation to make this a point of export from the county of Clare, and to construct a road to Ennis, its chief town. Opposite to this, on the Tipperary side, many interesting objects are descried: several old castles frown on the shores of two deep bays, Youghall and Dromineer bay, which diverge far to the right; and here and there, more modern houses, with sweeping lawns, and crowning woods, give animation to the scene.

The slow rate at which the steamer carried us through the lake, afforded ample time for observation; and although the weather was not what would generally be called fine, and gave rise to much grumbling among the passengers, I was not among the number of grumblers. It was not, indeed, one of those splendid summer days, when lakes are like mirrors, and woods are mirrored in them; when the green slopes seem to bask in sunshine, and repose dwells among the hills. It was all sorts of weather: we had gleams of sunshine; sudden mists; flying showers; moments of calm; sweeping breezes: so that in the course of one voyage up Loch Derg, I had the advantage of seeing it under as many aspects, as if I had traversed it in every season.

After passing Cow island, the loch bends a little to the left; and just at the bend, we passed close to a large island called Flanmore,—a green sloping island, on which I noticed some ruins. On the Galway side, the country here is wild and uninteresting; but on the Tipperary shore, villas are scattered here and there; and as we proceeded farther, they became more numerous. The lake

here, for several miles, is not more than a mile in width; and the Tipperary banks are as full of beauty, as wood, lawn, cultivation, and villas, can make them. The domain of Castle Biggs, is particularly attractive. A fine swelling headland projects into the lake; a grey stern ruin stands close to the water; while the modern house, in the midst of a beautiful park, looks down upon a pretty cove, studded with green islands. Opposite to this, on the Galway side, the banks are thickly covered with wood, which is not, however, of large growth; and a wild uninteresting tract of country reaches along Cloongagave bay,—the last into which the loch expands on the left.

We were now within sight of Portumna town and Portumna lodge,—or rather, the remains of what was once the fine seat of the Marquis of Clanricarde. Its situation is not particularly happy: the country is flat, and the wood generally of small growth; and it is not believed that the Marquis will ever again rebuild his mansion.

The great reach of Loch Derg, through which I have just conducted the reader, contains upwards of forty islands, varying in size from a mere point

to the circumference of perhaps two English miles. The loch, not reckoning in its width, the great reach which has Clare on one side, and Galway on the other, is from one to three miles broad. The depth is very variable. There is, however, everywhere, a sufficiency of water for all the purposes of navigation. The length of this expansion of the Shannon, from Portumna to Killaloe, is twenty-three miles.

The town of Portumna lies about a quarter of a mile from the river, and I had only time for a flying visit; for I wished to take advantage of the fine evening, and go forward to Banagher, in the small river steamer, to which the passengers from Killaloe are transferred. Portumna is a place of considerable export trade to Dublin, and enjoys a good retail trade besides; but the improvement of the town is much checked by the disinclination of the Marquis of Clanricarde to grant good leases.

The distance up the river, from Portumna to Banagher, is fourteen miles and a half; and, by the bye, I must not omit to note the expense of travelling by steam on the Shannon. The distance from Killaloe to Banagher, is thirty-eight miles;

and for this, the charge is 6*s.* 4*d.*, or 2*d.* per mile. The charge is certainly not high; and I understood, that the only ground of complaint—the slow rate of travelling—was on the eve of being removed, by the employment of a new steam vessel of greater power. The company has already done wonders; and it would be absurd, as yet, to expect perfection.

To the lover of the picturesque, the banks of the Shannon, between Portumna and Banagher, present little that is attractive. But to other minds, there may be an interest of perhaps a higher kind. We are navigating in a steam vessel, a river, here a hundred and thirty miles from the sea; and we know it to be navigable nearly a hundred miles higher. Its volume appears to be as great as when we saw it at Limerick: it is several hundred yards broad; and twenty and thirty feet deep. What a body of water is this! What are the Thames, the Medway, the Mersey, the Severn, the Trent, the Humber, the Tweed, or the Clyde, a hundred and thirty miles from the sea? I am not sure if they exist at all; or if any of them do, they are but brawling streams for the minnow to sport in. There is, in fact, an approach to the

sublime, in the spectacle of such a river as this; and the feeling receives aid from the character of its banks. These are wide, and apparently interminable plains, uninclosed,—almost level with the river,—bearing luxuriant crops of herbage, and feeding innumerable herds. We see scarcely any habitations; no villages or hamlets; and no road or traffic on the banks. The meadows of which I speak, extend on both sides of the river, the greater part of its course from Banagher to Portumna. These meadows are all overflowed during the winter, and are let for grazing at a very high rent. For many miles, there is nothing to relieve the monotony of these vast flats, excepting an old castle, called Torr Castle,—no otherwise remarkable than as being the only object which breaks the level. The views on this part of the Shannon, brought forcibly to my recollection, the banks of the Guadalquivir, between Seville and Cadiz.

Six or seven miles above Portumna, the river branches out, leaving several flat green islands; on one of which, a Martello tower, once a defence against the people of Connaught, is still foolishly kept up. The ruins of Meeleck monastery, too,

on the Galway side, attract the attention. They appeared to be both fine and extensive. It is here, that the lower Brusna river falls into the Shannon. It is the boundary line betwixt the provinces of Leinster and Munster; and is one of those aids, which may be brought to bear advantageously on the Shannon navigation. From the point of junction, it is only eight miles to the town of Birr, and at a very moderate expense, the Brusna may be rendered navigable.

From this point to Banagher, the river flows in various branches, leaving not fewer than twenty islands, great and small. The country on both sides, too, begins to improve; and to assume greater variety. Wood, though but of scanty growth, begins to appear, and the ground rises into some considerable elevations. I reached Banagher a little before dusk, and found excellent accommodation in the only hotel. This town, like all the others on the line of the inland navigation, is progressively advancing. There is a good corn market, a considerable export, and a thriving retail trade. The town itself has little in its appearance to recommend it. It consists chiefly of one very

long street; and has some batteries on the Connaught side; and a bridge of nineteen arches.

To have had the advantage of a steam vessel from Banagher, up the river to Athlone, I should have been obliged to have remained at Banagher several days; for, at present, this convenience occurs only twice a week. I sufficiently ascertained, however, that by travelling to Athlone by land, I should lose little in the attractions of scenery. The river, from Athlone to Banagher, flows through a wide tract of bog land,—even more uninteresting than the meadows which extend between Portumna and Banagher. The only relief from this monotony, is the Seven Churches,—ruins, which stand close by the river, about ten miles above Banagher.

I hired a car to Athlone; and left Banagher the day after I arrived in it. Here I found a change in the expense of travelling. Posting by car, had hitherto been everywhere 8*d.* per mile; but I now found, that the price varied with the number of persons using the car. If one person only travels, the price is 6*d.* per mile; if two travel, it is 8*d.*; if three travel, it is 10*d.*

For some miles after leaving Banagher, the road keeps near to the river; and then passes through the station, called Shannon harbour, where the Grand Canal to Dublin connects itself with the Shannon. From this point, there is regular communication daily; both to Dublin, and, by steam, on the Shannon, to Limerick. A little beyond Shannon harbour, we crossed the upper Brusna river, at a point where the wood scenery is extremely beautiful, and where also, the fine domain of Colonel L'Estrange skirts the road.

Soon after, we entered that wide tract of bog land, which I have described the Shannon as traversing. It extended on both sides of the road, as far as the eye could reach; and presented, under the influence too, of a dull atmosphere, as dreary a prospect as can well be conceived. The bog of Allan, which traverses a great part of King's County, lay on our right; and the bogs of Galway stretched away to the left. Occasionally, as the road ascended some trifling elevation, the Shannon was discovered, winding its brimful course, through the low, wide, brown, bog lands, which extended far on either side of it. To the utilitarian, even this

prospect is not deficient in interest. Turf—that article of prime necessity in Ireland—is not equally abundant in all parts; and here, in the extensive bogs through which a great river flows, there is security for an abundant and cheap supply of fuel to parts the most remote.

The road between Banagher and Athlone, I found one of the worst I had seen in Ireland. Few gentlemen's seats are in its neighbourhood; and, therefore, it is nobody's interest to make a job. Some considerable distance before reaching Athlone the country improves, and the immediate neighbourhood of the town is finely diversified and well cultivated.

CHAPTER XV.

Athlone—The Bridge and the Shannon—Barracks and Fortifications—Ballymahon—Land, Landlords, and Rents in the County of Longford—Condition of the Farmers—The Protestant Population—Religious Dissension—Want of Sympathy with the People, on the part of the Aristocracy—Labouring Classes — Con-acre — Irish Opposition to the Law — The Protestant Clergy—The Catholic Priesthood—Trading Magistrates—Necessity for a Stipendiary Magistracy.

ATHLONE is a remarkably ugly town. So deficient is it in good streets, that after I had walked over the whole town, I still imagined I had seen only the suburbs. But it is, notwithstanding, both an interesting town, and an excellent business town. It stands in the midst of a well cultivated and thickly peopled country; and, both in its export and general trade, is rapidly improving. At least eighty tons, chiefly corn, are sent down the Shannon, on a weekly average, by the Navigation Company. The bridge is extremely ancient, and is in

a disgracefully ruinous condition. In many places the parapet wall has given way; and the carriage-road is so narrow that, on a market-day, it frequently happens that one can pass in no other manner than by jumping from cart to car and from car to cart. The bridge is altogether a disgrace to the town and the kingdom. Notwithstanding that between Athlone and Portumna, the Shannon receives the two Brusna rivers, the Suck, and many smaller tributaries, it appears, at Athlone, to carry an undiminished volume of water. Above Athlone bridge—upwards of a hundred and fifty miles from the sea—the river is three hundred yards wide, and ranges from twenty to thirty-five feet in depth.

Athlone is a great military station. Extensive barracks, both for foot regiments and for artillery, lie in its immediate neighbourhood; and, on the Connaught side, a line of fortifications has been erected. In the very centre of the town, too, there is an ancient castle, with a strong central tower, and massive bastions. All these places are fully garrisoned.

Athlone, I made my head-quarters for a week; and, from it, made excursions through different

parts of the county of Longford. Independently of my chief objects of inquiry, another object of interest presented itself, in the reputed birthplace of Goldsmith, and in the scene of "The Deserted Village," to both of which I shall by and by return.

Ballymahon was one of my central points. This is a town about ten miles from Athlone, and capable of much improvement. A very fertile country surrounds it: it is sufficiently near to water communication; and some idea may be formed of the extent of its market, when I mention that from 300*l.* to 400*l.* worth of eggs have been sold on one market-day. The town and its capabilities are, however, utterly neglected by the proprietor, who grants no leases, and acts—as a great majority of landlords do—as if he had no interest in the permanent improvement of his property.

Land, throughout the county of Longford, is, with few exceptions, let high, but there *are* exceptions. Lady Ross forms one of these. The land on her ladyship's estate is well worth the value put upon it, and, with a little more skill and industry, would afford even higher rents than are exacted. But there is a lamentable want of good husbandry;

clean farming appears to be unknown: everywhere fields are seen covered with luxuriant crops of weeds, to be ploughed in as manure; and nowhere is there visible any of the neatness and care which are indicative of industrious habits. I visited a farmer who possessed 107 acres at 23*s.* the Irish acre (not above 16*s.* the English acre); almost every acre of the farm arable; and yet this man had as few comforts about him as are found among the holders of a few acres. It must not be forgotten, however, that one would frequently judge erroneously of the condition of a farmer, by observing only his way of life. More minute observation and closer inquiries must be made. Comfort, as we understand it, is neither understood nor relished in Ireland. I know examples, both in this and in other counties, of persons, living in the most miserable way, leaving considerable sums behind them; and giving handsome portions to their daughters. I do not adduce these examples with the view of insinuating that the land-occupiers are in a better condition than they appear to be. If examples occasionally occur, of farmers leaving behind them old stockings, full of sove-

reigns, or of portioning off their daughters handsomely, this is accomplished at the expense of all that we should call the necessaries of life; and I cannot think it any brilliant example of prosperity, that a farmer should leave a bag of gold behind him, if he and his family have subsisted all their lives on dry potatos. To entitle one to say that a farmer can live out of his land, he must be able to pay his rent; to live comfortably; to educate and provide for his family; and to do something towards improving his land. I fear, however, if such were the standard by which the condition of the Irish land-occupiers were to be judged, we should be brought to the conclusion, that none of the landholders in Ireland, excepting perpetual leaseholders, can live out of their land.

There is a considerable Protestant population in the county of Longford; but I was sorry to learn that much bad feeling existed, owing to a difference in religious belief. A trifling example of this occurred while I was in the neighbourhood. Lady Ross had established several Protestant schools: and the Catholic children, of the adjoining village, were accustomed to post themselves on a bridge, across

which the Protestant children were obliged to pass, and to spit upon them as they passed by. Several of these offenders were brought before an active and impartial neighbouring magistrate, who, very properly, sent them to the house of correction.

The resident landlords of the county of Longford, are, with few exceptions, an unimproving race; and I regretted to find, that betwixt them and the lower orders, there was not the best understanding. A wealthy and unembarrassed baronet, on being asked, why he did not embellish his domain, which stood greatly in need of it, and thus give some employment to the people, said, "he made it a rule to circumscribe, within the least possible limits, his intercourse with the lower orders." It is not every landlord who might choose so to express himself; but I fear there are too many who so act. I have generally found the landowners extremely ignorant of the real condition of the poor: and how, indeed, are they to gain their knowledge, unless they specially seek it? They do not themselves hire labourers; they do not call on the small farmer for rent; they do not themselves eject or drive for rent;—and it is not to the hall,

but to the farm-house, that the mendicant, and the mendicant's wife, and the orphan child, and the unemployed labourer, carry their sack, and their petition. The landlord has his gate-house, beyond which the vigilant porter permits no unwelcome visitor to pass.

The wages of labour throughout the county of Longford are low: 8*d.* in summer, and 6*d.* in winter, is the usual rate; and that without diet. Many have endeavoured to convince me that this rate is sufficiently high for the quantity of labour performed; and that it would be greater economy to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* to an English labourer, than 8*d.* to an Irishman; and that I might, every hour of the day, have confirmation of this, by observing the listless way a labourer goes about his work. But, when I see a labourer leaning on his spade, I do not see, in this, so much a proof of unwillingness to work, as of want of full employment; and I am not aware that there is any complaint of idleness against the migrating Irish, by those who employ them: and besides,—let those who make unfavourable comparisons between English and Irish labourers, ask themselves the question—how an English labourer

would work, if a scanty meal of dry potatos were substituted for bacon and beer?

The con-acre system is universal in this county; and the rent paid does not generally exceed the rate of 8*l.* per acre. The same practice, too, prevails here, as I had found in the county of Kilkenny, and in some other parts, by which the individual furnishing manure receives, rent free, the produce of as much land as he is able to manure. At 7*l.* an acre for manured potato land, the tenant appears to have a good bargain. Add to the 7*l.*,—3*l.* 10*s.* for seed and labour; and suppose the produce of the acre fifteen tons of potatos, at 2*d.* per stone. The value would in that case be 20*l.*, leaving to the occupier 9*l.* 10*s.* if he sent the potatos to market. These, too, are both low calculations: fifteen tons is not the most abundant produce; and 2*d.* per stone is a low price. The rent of con-acre here is lower, however, than I have generally found it elsewhere. The reader will recollect that 10*l.* and 12*l.* are the more usual rents.

I regretted to have confirmation in the county of Longford, of that desire generally ascribed to the

Irish peasantry, of opposing the course of justice. It has generally been said, that in this, Ireland offers a great contrast to the neighbouring island: that, whereas in England, every man's hand is raised in support of the law; in Ireland, all are arrayed in opposition to it. That there is a considerable degree of truth in this, cannot be denied; though, at the same time, many acts, which, at first sight, might be set down as arising out of pure dislike of the course of justice, appear, upon minuter inquiry, to have originated in clanship; and in a conviction common throughout Ireland, of the claim which all relations have to protection, however grievously they may have offended against the law. Examples of this, I think, I have already given, when speaking of the assizes at Ennis. Some facts, however, which came to my knowledge in Longford, were strongly indicative of a determination to set law at defiance; and of a disposition to regard all men as martyrs, or at least as injured persons, who had been brought, by crimes however heinous, within the operation of the law.

I will adduce two instances. A stranger to that part of Ireland, and a Protestant, was servant in

the house of a magistrate; and he robbed his master to a considerable extent. This man, though a perfect stranger, was screened by the peasantry during a long period, and was received and entertained on no other passport, than as being in danger of being overtaken by justice for having robbed a good master—a magistrate. Another example is still more striking. An individual, moving in the upper ranks of life, named Luke Dillon, was tried some years ago for rape committed under most aggravated circumstances, the object of the crime, too, being in his own sphere of life. Sentence of death was commuted to banishment for life; and Luke Dillon appeared to be forgotten. A man, however, one day appeared in this neighbourhood, and gave out that *he* was Luke Dillon, returned from banishment, and setting the law at defiance. The man was a swindler,—not Luke Dillon; but he judged—and he judged correctly—that by pretending to be this individual who had suffered under a sentence of the law, and who wished to set it at defiance, he should receive protection, and be enabled the easier to exercise his swindling propensities. This man was appre-

hended, and brought to trial at the sessions; and it appeared in evidence, that he had been concealed, protected, and entertained, as being the infamous wretch who had been banished, and who, it was believed, had been adroit enough to outwit the law.

I was happy to find the Protestant clergy of this part of Ireland greatly respected; and this respect is evinced in singular ways. From time to time, considerable emigration has taken place from this part of Ireland to America; and it is not unusual for remittances to be sent home from the colonies, by those who have emigrated, for the use of their poor relatives. Now it is a curious fact, and a fact that consists with my knowledge, that Catholic emigrants send their remittances to the care, not of the Catholic priest, but of the Protestant clergyman, to be distributed by him among those pointed out. The same respect for, and reliance on, the Protestant clergyman, is evinced in other ways. It is not at all unusual, for Catholics possessed of a little money, to leave the Protestant clergyman their executor, in preference to their own priest, or to any other individual. The Irish peasant has naturally a respect for, and confidence in, a gentleman,

of whatever persuasion he is. Ah! how the gentlemen of Ireland have laboured to eradicate this respect, and to destroy this confidence! Yet it still exists; and needs but a little intercourse, and a little kindliness, to be at any time restored.

The influence of the Catholic priesthood is seen on all occasions excepting those in which the guardianship of money is concerned; and it is to be regretted, that this influence is not always well exerted. Every one who knows anything of magisterial business in Ireland, or who has had opportunities of attending assizes or sessions, well knows that this influence is frequently exerted in co-operation with the peasantry, against the law; and in screening criminals from its operation. A hundred instances of this are on record. I know a case in the county of Longford, of a man being put upon his trial for abduction, — when the priest volunteered to give the man a character; and yet, the individual tried, had been concerned in two other cases of abduction: and it came out on a cross-examination, that these facts were perfectly known to the volunteering priest.

I do look upon it as most important to the

civilization and to the peace of Ireland, that a better order of Catholic priesthood should be raised. Taken, as they at present are, from the very inferior classes, they go to Maynooth, and are reared in monkish ignorance and bigotry; and they go to their cures, with a narrow education, grafted on the original prejudices and habits of thinking, which belong to the class among which their early years were passed. From my considerable experience of Catholic countries, I know enough of Popery to convince me how necessary it is, that its priests should have all the advantages which are to be gathered beyond the confines of a cloister.

I found in one part of this county, great want of accommodation for the Protestant congregation. I allude to the parish "of the Union of Kilglass." There is monstrous abuse here. The bishop is rector, and draws from four to five hundred pounds per annum; and yet there is no church, or Protestant service in the parish. His lordship, on being respectfully written to on the subject, replied, that there was service in the next parish!

Trading magistrates are not yet extinct in the county Longford: value is still occasionally received for magisterial protection, in the shape of

labour,—such as, a winter-cutting of turf being brought to a man's door. Neither is there much co-operation among the magistracy. They take pleasure in thwarting each other; and it is not unusual for persons imprisoned by the warrant of one magistrate, to be forthwith liberated by the warrant of another. This, I think, ought not to be possible. Crime can never be effectually repressed, where such a state of things exists; and every week's new experience in Ireland, more and more convinced me, that the establishment of a general stipendiary magistracy, would be one great step towards the civilization and pacification of the country. Without this, the factions which disturb so many of the counties, cannot be put effectually down. The unpaid magistracy of Ireland cannot, as a body, practise that steady, fearless, and energetic vindication of the law, which must certainly go hand in hand with every measure of equity and conciliation.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY MANNING AND SMITHSON,
IVY-LANE, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 July, 2018